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# HISTORY

## REVEALED

BRINGING THE PAST TO LIFE  
ISSUE 23 // DECEMBER 2015 // £4.50



### STALIN

The brutal regime of  
Britain's WWII ally

### THE BLACK DEATH

The terror of  
medieval Europe

#### PLUS

**THE WRIGHT BROTHERS**

BOSTON TEA PARTY

**DEATH ON THE LUSITANIA**

THE COLD WAR

# THE ROMANS ARE COMING

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Caesar's invasion to Hadrian's Wall

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### COCO CHANEL

The ultimate rags  
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### THE KING AND MRS SIMPSON

Edward VIII's abdication

### PROHIBITION

When America was  
dying for a drink



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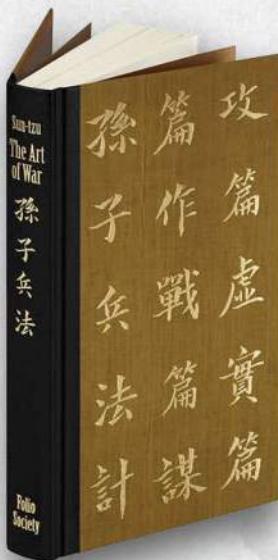
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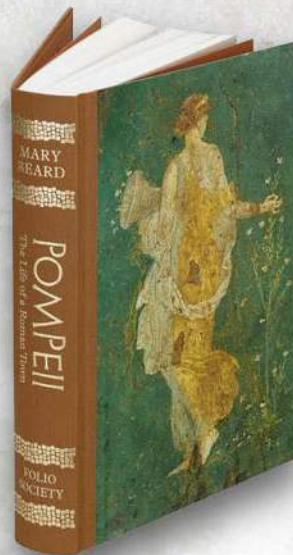
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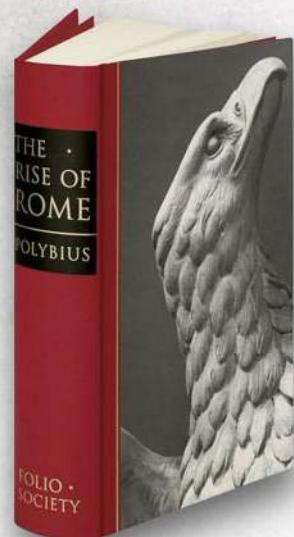
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DESMOND SEWARD



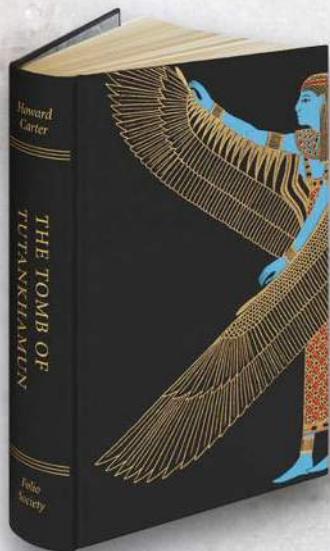
**The Art of War**  
SUN-TZU



**Pompeii: The Life of  
a Roman Town**  
MARY BEARD



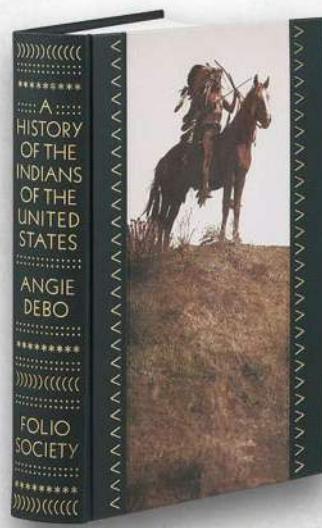
**The Rise of Rome**  
POLYBIUS



**The Tomb of  
Tutankhamun**  
HOWARD CARTER



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Kings of Britain**  
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# Welcome



Though human settlement in Britain dates back to prehistoric times, it wasn't until the Romans landed on our shores, in 55 BC, that the island nation was **catapulted onto the world stage**. While the invaders would **paint a picture of glorious conquest** back home, the truth was another matter. The further north the Romans pushed, the tougher they found the fight – renowned archaeologist **Miles Russell explores this troublesome Roman colony** from page 26.

We don't only have feisty Britons for you this issue. From across the pond, there's George Robert Twelves Hewes – the shoemaker who **played his part in the events leading to the American Revolutionary War**. Plus we're following the adventures of Nellie Bly – the audacious 19th-century journalist who raced **round the world in under 80 days** (p60).

Staying with revolutionary minds, there's **Coco Chanel** (p74) – the most radical fashion designer of her time – and the **Wright brothers, who made their pioneering flight** just 112 years ago (p20). The gains in technology



Roman re-enactors march along the fortification at the northernmost edge of the Roman Empire, Hadrian's Wall

since then have been extraordinary. Such advances were key in the mind of **one of the most feared men of the 20th century**, Joseph Stalin. Read his ruthless mission to make Russia a superpower from page 67.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *History Revealed* – please **keep your letters and emails coming** to let us know what you've liked.

**Paul McGuinness**  
Editor

**Don't miss our Christmas issue, on sale 10 December**

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## ON THE COVER

Your key to the big stories...



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## THIS MONTH WE'VE LEARNED...

**2,868**

The number of diamonds, among hundreds of other gems, in the Imperial State Crown. Page 91.

**11 billion**

The amount of tax revenue, in US dollars, lost during the 13-year Prohibition era. Today, that sum is equivalent to around \$201 billion. Page 52.

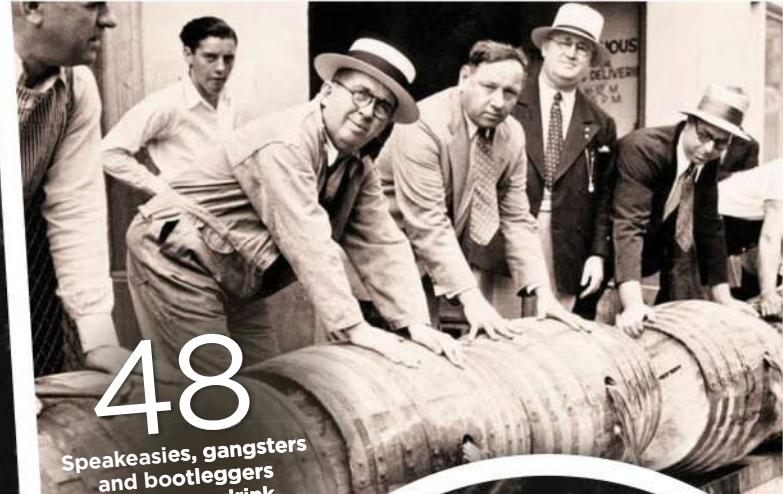
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The number of Archbishops of Canterbury lost to the 1348-50 Black Death epidemic. Page 56.



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Living on the edge  
of the ancient empire



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Speakeasies, gangsters  
and bootleggers  
- getting a drink  
during Prohibition



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The journalist who raced Phileas Fogg around the world ..... p60

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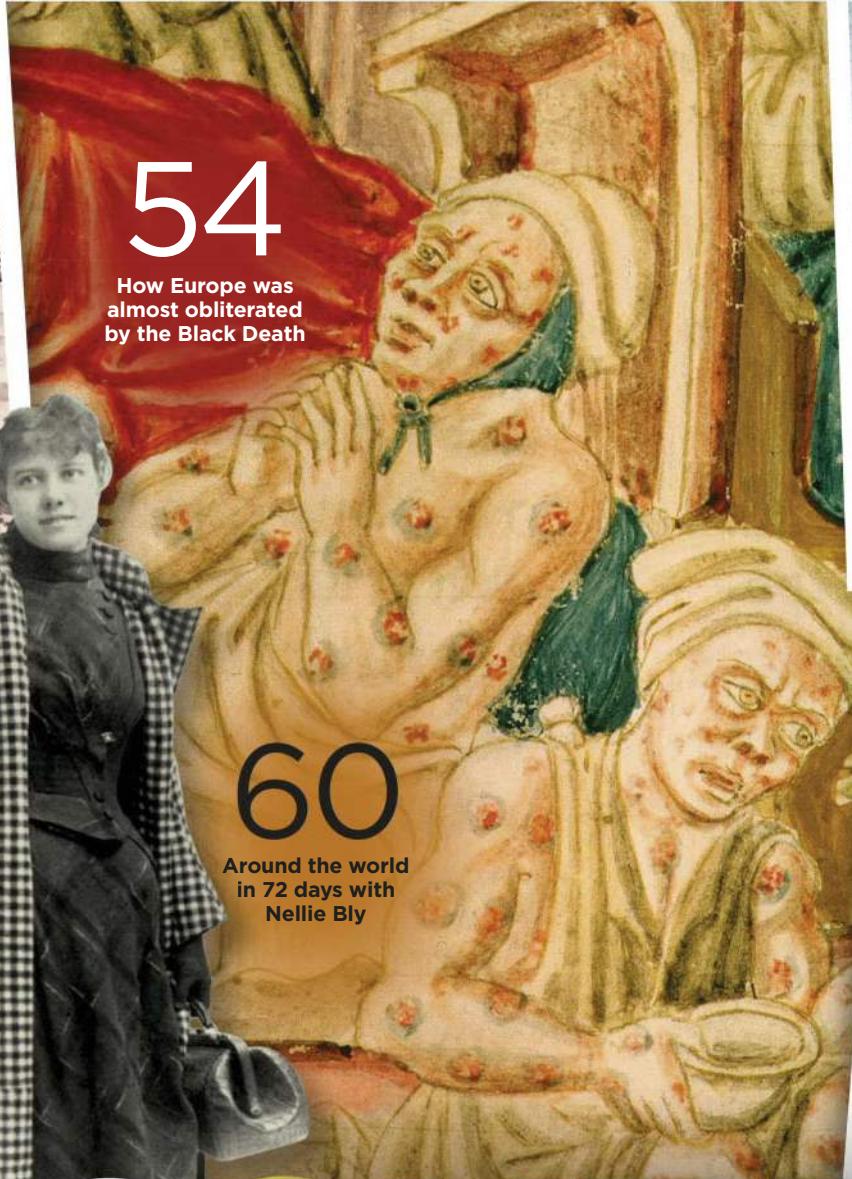
Fancy a cuppa? Meet the poor shoemaker at the Boston Tea Party

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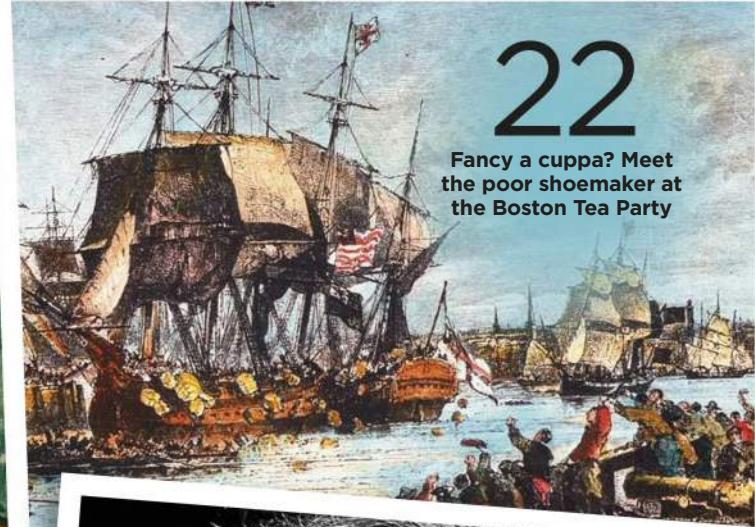
How Europe was almost obliterated by the Black Death

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Around the world in 72 days with Nellie Bly

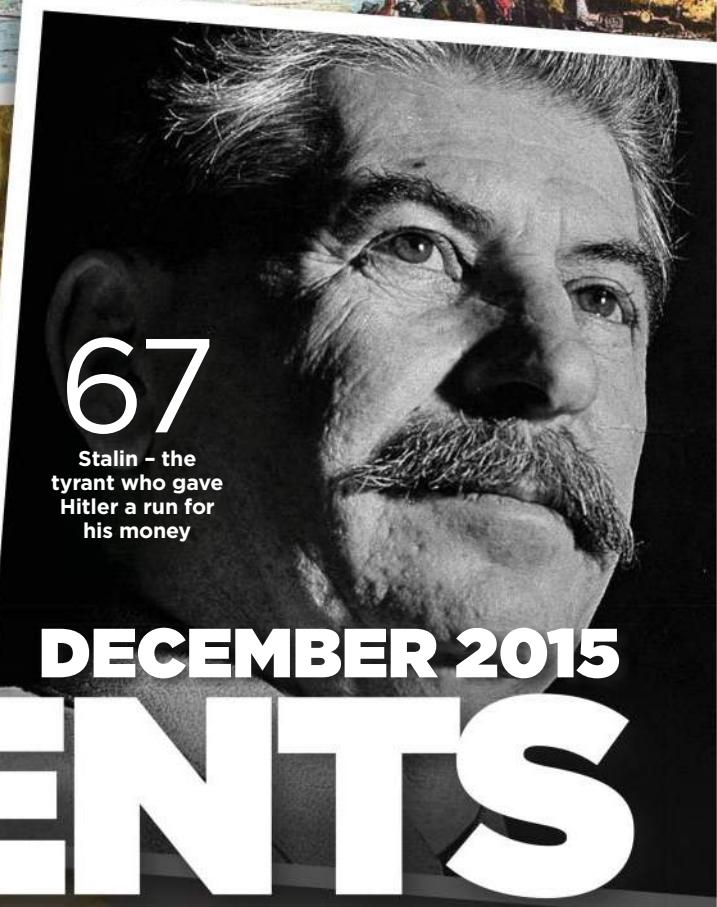


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## CHRISTMAS OFFER!

**SAVE 44%!**

More details on our subscription offers on **page 24**



## READERS' LETTERS

Get in touch – share your opinions on history and our magazine

### HOLDING CASTLE

I bought your July issue last week – yes, it takes a long time to reach Australia! – and I think I have an interesting addendum to add to the article on William Wilberforce and the abolition of the slave trade (Amazing Grace, The Reel Story, July 2015).

In 1953, I was among one of the civil engineers building

### "How anachronistic it seemed to have castles on a tropical beach surrounded by palm trees"

a 55-mile railway through the rainforests of what was then the Gold Coast (which is now in Ghana). Most Sundays – our day off – many of us would head down to the coast for a day on the beach. Imagine our surprise to see a medieval castle by the small town of Cape Coast.

This was only one of many castles along the West African coast, which were designed to hold slaves while awaiting the arrival of the ships that would transport them to the Caribbean. The 'poshest' castle was on the beach outside of the capital, Accra. This was Fort

Christiansborg, or Osu Castle, built by the Danes. When we were there, it was the home of the Governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Charles Arden-Clarke. Cape Coast Castle was built by the British and I remember another near Takoradi called Elmina Castle, built by the Portuguese and converted to a

### LETTER OF THE MONTH

## Amazing Grace

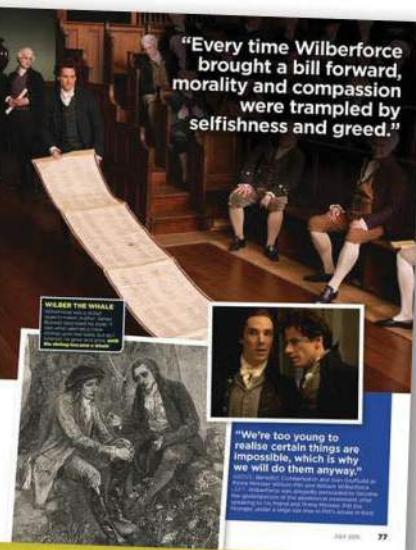
Jonny Wilkes meets the real William Wilberforce – the man who tirelessly pursued an end to the British slave trade

### MAN OF THE ANIMALS



"No matter how loud you shout, you will not drown out the voice of the people."

THE REEL STORY



"Every time Wilberforce brought a bill forward, morality and compassion were trampled by selfishness and greed."

Grahame Smith,  
Western Australia

### Editor replies:

What a fascinating, if terrible, reminder of the impact of the slave trade – and a potent image of why people like Wilberforce fought to end it.

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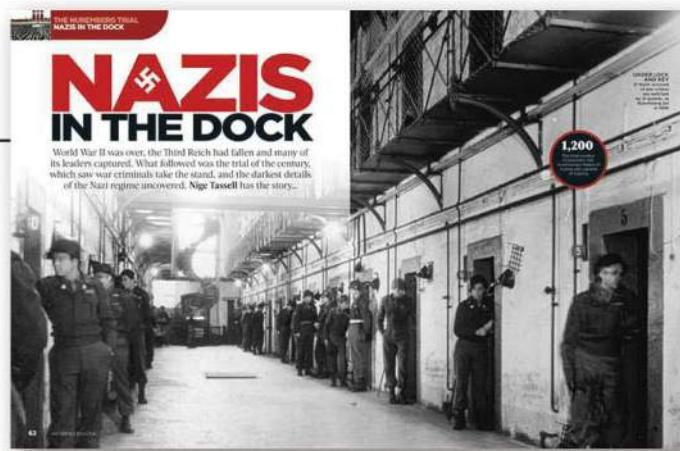
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## TRIAL OF THE CENTURY

**The Nuremberg Trials brought many Nazis to justice, but should Allied leaders have been among those in the dock?**

memorial – only to be disturbed once again to confirm a possibly faulty DNA test. A while back, I wrote in and suggested that DNA tests on the murdered prince Edward V take place solely as this issue of identification was unresolved, but the Romanovs' is surely a case closed. That poor family has suffered enough in life and death, and this further invasion of their rest seems unnecessary and ghoulish.

**Matthew Wilson,**  
Wolverhampton

the mass deportations of 1941 won't get a mention in May and June next year to mark the 75th anniversary of these horrific crimes.

**Raymond Dale,**  
via email

### Editor replies:

With tens of millions dying in his rule, Joseph Stalin is a strong contender for the century's most brutal tyrant (against some stiff competition!). We explore the life of the 'Man of Steel' on page 67.

**Love this page and magazine! I'm an expat living in Canada, I wish I could afford a subscription. Keep up the great work guys!**  
Anne White

### Editor replies:

The recent exhumation of the last Russian Tsar and his wife has, indeed, divided opinion. While the Orthodox Church would like to confirm the royals' identities before reburying other family members with them, many share your belief that it is a step too far.

## WAR CRIMINAL

In response to your question "Should any Allied war leaders have been tried as war criminals, as well as German?" (November 2015, Nazis in the Dock), there is no doubt in my mind that Stalin should have.

For most Eastern Europeans, 23 August 1939 is a seminal date. This was when Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union signed their horrific pact – it was basically the green flag to launch full-scale war and send millions of Europeans to their deaths, either on the front or deportation to Siberia where the conditions were no better than in the German camps. Because they were on Soviet territory the Soviets got away with murder. I would guess that

a ball. The unsung originator of the defining feature of the game of rugby, that is putting the ball down behind the try line to kick at goal was Jem Mackie. Supposedly, he was a powerfully built boy whom others found difficult to stop. It should really be his name on the World Cup trophy. Saying that Webb Ellis invented rugby is the equivalent of saying that Columbus discovered America or Thomas Edison invented the light bulb.

**Ross Hamilton,**  
via email

**I love Saturday mornings in bed with @HistoryRevMag. I now know all about Ealdorman Byrhtnoth. Dinner party convo will be top-notch tonight.**  
@John\_Bizzell

## A MORAL MOTIVE?

I wish to clarify a comment in your September issue about the Emancipation Proclamation (I Read the News Today, September 2015). Technically, the document only abolished slavery in the states remaining outside of the Union, but slavery would be allowed to continue in states returning to the fold. Lincoln's intentions were to end the North/South conflict and to prevent any future spread of slavery.

In this case, however, the final result was the same. This is a common misconception over here, and I only learned of this a few years ago.

**David Schor,**  
Pennsylvania, USA

### Editor replies:

You're absolutely right that the Proclamation was a tactical decision – Lincoln knew the South's economy depended on slavery so it was just as much a financial move as a moral one.

## THE FINAL TSAR

History has not been kind to the Romanovs. After being horrifically murdered, they were buried in a mine with grenades, exhumed, reburied, their graves burned with acid, re-exhumed and finally lain at rest in a great

## ARE YOU A WINNER?

The lucky winners of the crossword from issue 21 are:

**Pamela Lentschner,** Wiltshire  
**Robert Honeybone,** West Sussex

**John Marshall,** Hampshire  
Congratulations! You have each won a copy of *Floating Palaces* by William H Miller, worth £19.99.

To tackle this month's crossword turn to page 96.

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Bringing the past to life

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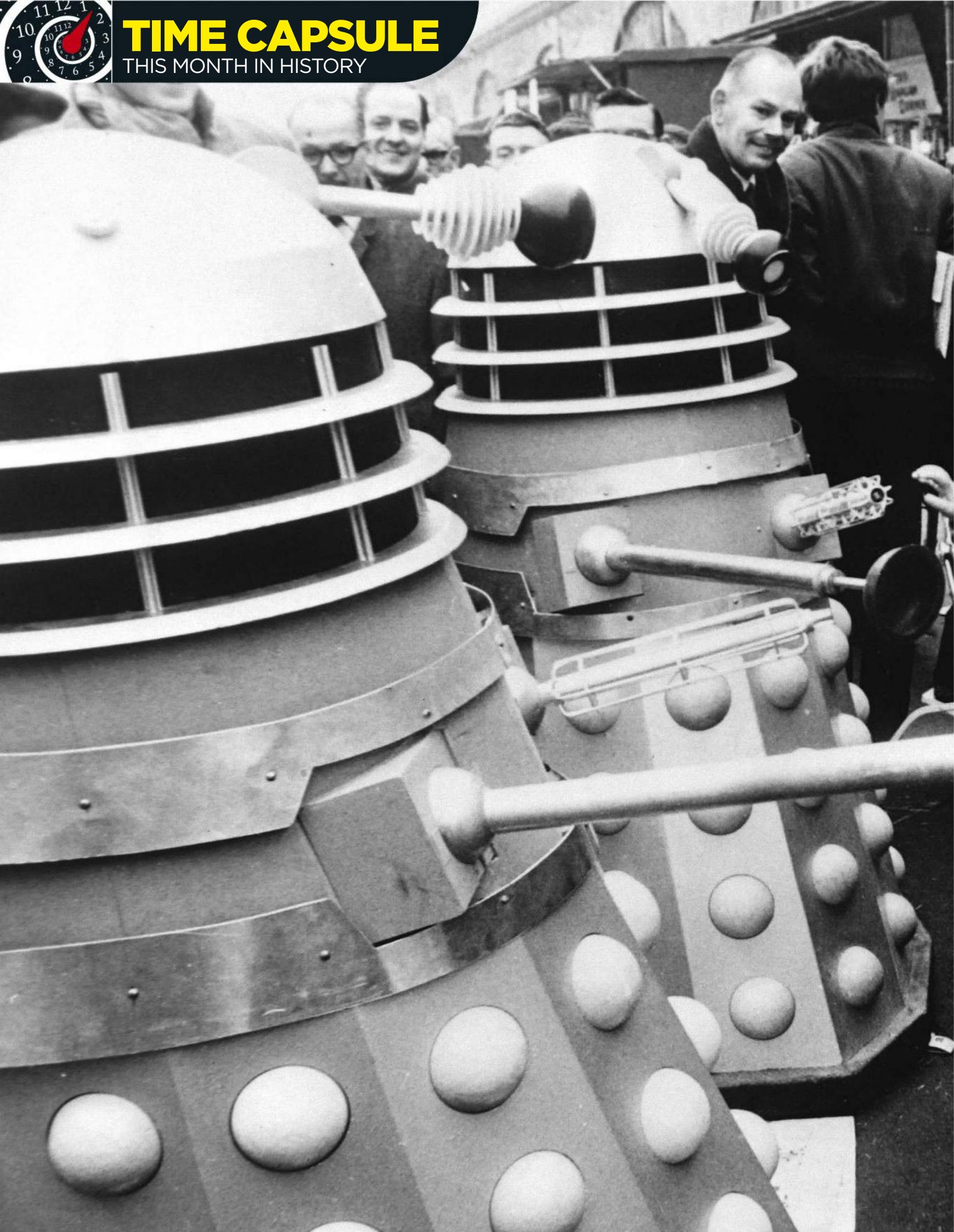
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# TIME CAPSULE

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY





SNAPSHOT

# 1964 EXTERMINATE! EXTERMINATE!

The Doctor is nowhere to be seen, but that doesn't stop children clamouring to get closer to his mortal enemy, the Daleks. What's more, they've flocked to this London street in the hope of taking one home, as the BBC are giving away surplus props as Christmas presents.

By December 1964, the sci-fi series *Doctor Who* was into its second series, but already a phenomenon. An average of 10 million viewers tuned in per episode to watch the Doctor (played for three years by the curmudgeonly William Hartnell) battle the Daleks and travel space and time in his TARDIS.



TIME CAPSULE  
DECEMBER

SNAPSHOT  
**1962**  
**ARE YOU**  
**HAVING A**  
**GIRAFFE?**

Happy, a four-year-old giraffe from Chessington Zoo, arrives just in time at West London's Olympia to appear in the famous Christmas show by Bertram Mills Circus. Wild and exotic creatures - lions, elephants, bears and seals to name a few - used to be a mainstay of many circuses in 20th-century Britain, but as greater emphasis was put on animal welfare, such spectacles became less common.







**TIME CAPSULE**  
**DECEMBER**





SNAPSHOT

# 1940 CHRISTMAS UNDER FIRE

There is little to make the festive season in 1940 very cheerful. Rationing has made Christmas feasts meagre, the government encourages people to buy war bonds rather than presents and the constant threat of German air raids, as well as causing untold death and despair, forces millions to spend 25 December underground. And yet families come together in crudely decorated shelters - Christmas trees have to be extra short to fit - and celebrate the holiday with smiles on their faces and hope that the next year will bring peace.



## TIME CAPSULE DECEMBER

# "I READ THE NEWS TODAY..."

Weird and wonderful, it all happened in **December**



### ANIMAL (WHITE) HOUSE 1828 THE PARTY PRESIDENT

When war-hero Andrew Jackson won the US Presidential election in December 1828, he was a crowd-pleasing choice.

On the day of his inauguration, it was reported that **20,000 people descended on Washington DC** to see him speak and try to attend the reception at the White House (when anyone could get in and shake the President's hand). The mob, however, was unruly, with one account claiming, "Ladies fainted, men were seen with bloody noses and **such a scene of confusion took place as is impossible to describe.**" Expensive china and furniture was supposedly broken, Jackson fled – possibly through a window – and the only way to empty the building was to fill tubs with punch and position them on the White House lawn.

### CROSSWORD GETS FIRST CLUE 1913 FUN WITH WORDS

Sunday mornings with the newspaper were never the same after 21 December 1913, all because the editor of the *New York World* newspaper needed to fill space in the 'Fun' section. Liverpool-born journalist Arthur Wynne quickly devised a **diamond-shaped word puzzle (left)**, named a 'word-cross', which was completed by solving the clues below. His word-cross appeared in following editions, but thanks to a typesetting error, the name was switched. They've been known as 'crosswords' since.

### HOW TO TURN HEADS 1973 THE POWER OF CHRIST COMPELS YOU!

It didn't take long after the release of *The Exorcist* on 26 December 1973 (an unlikely viewing choice for the day after Christmas), for the horror to build a reputation as the **scariest film ever made**. There were reports of people fainting during screenings and extreme measures to stop people watching the film, starring Linda Blair as a possessed 12-year-old girl. Tales of a priest attacking the screen to exorcise the evil spirit, and **nuns spraying the long queues with holy water**, however, only drove more patrons into the cinema.





## WITCHES GET STITCHED UP 1484 ALL DOOM AND BROOM

Fear of witchcraft was all-too common in medieval times, with **witches being blamed for anything from diseases to crop failures**.

Then, on 5 December 1484, those seeking to persecute suspected witches were given powerful backing when Pope Innocent VIII issued a bull recognising the existence of witches and giving approval for **“correcting, imprisoning, punishing and chastising”** them. It is said that Innocent's declaration opened the floodgates for centuries of horrific and brutal witch hunts.



### BOX OFFICE SMASH

William Friedkin's cult classic was nominated for ten Oscars (it was the first horror to be up for Best Picture) and has, to date, made over \$400 million.



## GOOD THINGS COME TO THOSE WHO WAIT 1759 GIVE GUINNESS A GO

It is safe to say that Irish brewer Arthur Guinness must have been confident his distinctive stout would be popular with the masses. When, on 31 December 1759, he took over a disused brewery at St James's Gate in Dublin, **the lease was for a whopping 9,000 years**. And Guinness are still there – some 250 years into their nine-millennia tenancy – and selling over 1.8 billion pints of the black stuff every year.

## ABEL EXPLORER 1642 TASMAN SEES NEW LAND – NEW ZEALAND

After months at sea, Dutchman Abel Tasman achieved something on 13 December 1642 that no European had done to date – he looked upon (what is now) New Zealand. Unfortunately, the **first meeting with the native population, the Māori, didn't go well**. They mistook the trumpet calls from his ships as a war cry so attacked and killed several sailors in their waka (canoes). Before leaving, Tasman named the place 'Murderers' Bay'.

## SOMETHING HE ATE 1135 LAST M-EEL

King Henry I was not short of enemies, especially from rivals to his English throne, yet his undoing was due not to any of them, but a bowl of his favourite dish. His 35-year reign came to an end on 1 December 1135 after, it is said, he contracted food poisoning following a **“surfeit of lampreys”** (eel-like fish). As his sons were already dead – their ship had sunk in the English Channel in 1120 – the **country was plunged into a civil war**, the Anarchy, as Henry's daughter Matilda and nephew Stephen fought for the crown.



## “...OH BOY”

**December** events that changed the world

### 7 DECEMBER 43 BC CICERO'S LAST WORD

The great Roman orator and former consul Marcus Tullius Cicero – declared an enemy of the state – is assassinated.

### 25 DECEMBER AD 800 CHARLEMAGNE CROWNED

Having united most of Western Europe, Charlemagne is crowned as the first Holy Roman Emperor.

### 13 DECEMBER 1577 SEEING THE WORLD

English sailor Francis Drake sets sail on his circumnavigation of the Earth.

### 28 DECEMBER 1612 GALILEO'S GALACTIC GAZE

According to his astronomical sketches, Italian Galileo Galilei observes Neptune for the first time.

### 20 DECEMBER 1803 LOUISIANA PURCHASED

Some 828,000 square miles of land is formally ceded from France to the US.

### 8 DECEMBER 1813 INSTANT CLASSICAL

Ludwig van Beethoven premieres his latest – his iconic Seventh Symphony.

### 10 DECEMBER 1948 HUMANITY'S MAGNA CARTA

The 30-article Universal Declaration of Human Rights is adopted by the UN.

## AND FINALLY...

On 17 December 1900, the Academie des Sciences in Paris announced the Guzman Prize – offering **100,000 francs** to anyone who succeeded in “communicating with a star and receiving a response”.



DAILY SKETCH, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1936

WHAT THE EMPIRE SAYS: Pages 6 and 7

WIRELESS: P. 18

# DAILY SKETCH

No. 8,615

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1936

ONE PENNY

M.P.s  
CHEER  
BALDWIN'S  
STATEMENT

## Mrs. SIMPSON 'WILLING TO GIVE UP THE KING'

### Official Statement To 'Daily Sketch'

BY CECILIE LESLIE

MRS. ERNEST SIMPSON, the woman the King wants to marry, is "willing to withdraw from an unhappy situation if such action would solve the problem."

Lord Brownlow, Lord-in-Waiting to the King, told me this in the Hotel Majestic, Cannes, last night.

We sat in a private room at the hotel awaiting Lord Brownlow, who had travelled from London with Mrs. Simpson. At 8.30 p.m. he arrived with Mr. Herman Rogers, Mrs. Simpson's host, and a secretary.

#### CHARGED ATMOSPHERE

The doors of the room were locked. I could sense that we were about to hear something momentous. The atmosphere was charged. We waited. . . . Then suddenly Lord Brownlow was speaking.

"What I have to say to-night," he stated, "is divided into two sections—separate and distinct.

"Firstly a denial, second an official statement from Mrs. Simpson.

"The denial is as follows: 'Mrs. Simpson has given no interview of any sort or kind and made no statement to the Press whatsoever other than the statement I now make on her behalf!'"

#### THAT IS ALL...

Lord Brownlow picked up a sheet of typescript. The rustle of the paper sounded like machine-gun fire in the silence.

He then read the statement, which was dated "Cannes, December 7, 1936" and bore Mrs. Simpson's signature, "Wallis Simpson."

None of us could speak as he finished. We had expected news. But this...

Lord Brownlow spoke again as he carefully folded the statement and handed it to the secretary to place in an attaché case.

"That, gentlemen, is all for the present."

Thus did Mrs. Simpson take the British public—the world—into her confidence.

I understand that there were several phone calls between the villa and Eng-

#### The Statement

"MRS. SIMPSON, THROUGHOUT THE LAST FEW WEEKS, HAS INvariably WISHED TO AVOID ANY ACTION OR PROPOSAL WHICH WOULD HURT OR DAMAGE HIS MAJESTY OR THE THRONE.

"TO-DAY HER ATTITUDE IS UNCHANGED, AND SHE IS WILLING, IF SUCH ACTION WOULD SOLVE THE PROBLEM, TO WITHDRAW FORTHWITH FROM A SITUATION THAT HAS BEEN RENDERED BOTH UNHAPPY AND UNTENABLE."

land yesterday and that these had a direct bearing on this latest development.

It is understood that Mrs. Simpson is now debating her next step—whether she will remain in Cannes for some days, return to America or go back to England, where there are many of her effects which must be settled up.

#### SEEN IN GARDEN

It is recognised, however, that any decision must rest now with the King.

Mrs. Simpson was seen gravely walking backwards and forwards among the peach trees in the villa gardens during the day. This part of the grounds is very secluded and it was no doubt there that Mrs. Simpson reached her momentous decision.

With her in the gardens were two Scots terriers.

Mrs. Simpson was wearing a navy cardigan over a light dress.



To-day her attitude is unchanged and she is willing, if such action should solve the problem, to withdraw forthwith from a situation that has been rendered both unhappy and untenable.

#### FLING WITH A KING

Once the British press broke their silence on 3 December 1936, **public opinion was firmly against Wallis.**

Rumours abounded that she was either a German spy or that she bewitched Edward with sexual techniques she learned in China.

Now read pages 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 13, 15, 16

## YESTERDAY'S PAPERS

On 8 December 1936, the latest twist in the abdication crisis hit the papers

# “THE BOY WILL RUIN HIMSELF IN 12 MONTHS” KING GEORGE V

Not yet a year into his reign, Edward VIII was agonising over a historic decision: should he stay on the throne or be with the woman he loved?

After meeting at a house party in 1931, the handsome, if imprudent, playboy Edward began an affair with Wallis Simpson, an American socialite married to her second husband (having divorced her first). Barely accepted when he was Prince of Wales, their relationship was intolerable once he became King in January 1936. Throughout the year, the monarchy was in a constitutional crisis, as strong opposition from both religious and political bodies argued that Edward, as Head of the Church of England, couldn't marry a divorced woman and remain King. Yet, Edward was besotted.

In August, they were spotted on holiday in the Mediterranean, providing great photos for American and European newspapers – they were kept out the British press to avoid embarrassment. By December, however, the story was too big to be hushed up, especially after Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin gave Edward three options: end his relationship with Wallis; marry her and risk his ministers resigning; or abdicate. Despite Wallis's announcement that she was “willing to give up the King”, Edward's mind was made up.

On 10 December, he signed the Instrument of Abdication and, the next day, declared he could not burden his royal duties “without the help and support of the woman I love”. Edward, now Duke of Windsor, went into exile in France and married Wallis in 1937. ©



TOP: Edward and Wallis are snapped together during an August holiday in the Mediterranean  
RIGHT: A group supporting Edward gathers outside Buckingham Palace in early December



### MONARCH'S MOB

During his 327-day reign, **Edward had been popular among the people**. So in the wake of his abdication speech – amidst fears that, without a king, the country could plummet into revolution – protests broke out showing support for him.

## 1936 ALSO IN THE NEWS...

**1 DECEMBER** The Hitler Youth – the Nazi Party's organisation for the **training and education of Germany's teenage boys** – becomes mandatory for all males deemed of acceptable “racial purity”.

**6 DECEMBER** After being condemned to death in his native Soviet Union, Marxist revolutionary **Leon Trotsky is granted asylum in Mexico**. In 1940, however, he is assassinated on the orders of Stalin.

**12 DECEMBER** Chinese leader **Chiang Kai-Shek is seized by his own generals**, who demand he cease the civil war and unite his Nationalists with the Communists against the threat of Japan.



## GRAPHIC HISTORY

The conquering corporation that pillaged the world

# 1600 THE EAST INDIA COMPANY RECEIVES A ROYAL CHARTER

Before the East India Company, Britain was a land largely lacking in tea, cups, pepper and the colour purple...

**B**etter known today as the East India Company (EIC), when it was formally established by Royal Charter on 31 December 1600, the company had the snappy title of Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies. It was originally created to take a bite out of the Asian (or 'East Indian') spice trade, which, at the time, had been dominated by the Spanish and Portuguese.

The East India Company had their own ships, private armies, even their own coinage (below)

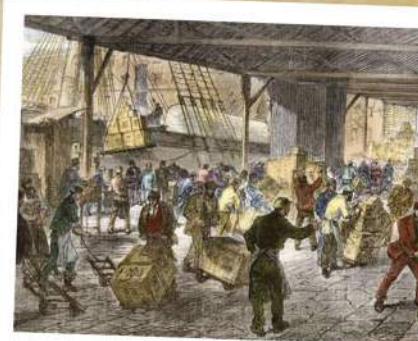


£68,373



The amount of money owned by the EIC when it was first established in late 1600.

But the EIC's cargo soon spread beyond just spices as its power and wealth grew to an extraordinary size. From trading in everything from tea, cotton and opium, the EIC became a monopolistic corporation, which – with its own armies and lands – ruled swathes of the British Empire.



280,000

The approximate total size of the EIC's various armies by the mid-19th century.



38

The number of guns on *The Red Dragon* (formerly called the *Scourge of Malice*), the EIC's first flagship vessel.

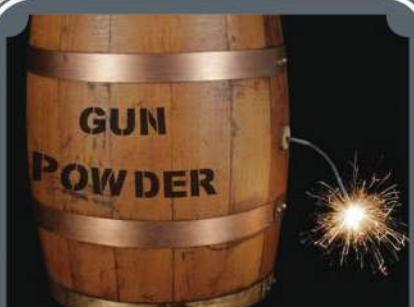


indigo



Known as 'blue gold', indigo dye was one of the most valuable commodities the EIC traded in. The Brits developed a total monopoly on the dye, and sold it throughout Europe at great profit.

saltpetre



Potassium nitrate, also known as saltpetre, is one of the key components in gunpowder, which was in high demand back in warring Europe. In 1682, the EIC imported a whopping 1,500 tons of the stuff.



## spices



Back in Europe, demand was booming for flavoursome cargos such as cloves, nutmeg and mace, as the items were used in food as well as medicines and perfumes.

£££££

## opium



Concerned about the loss of British silver, and the decreasing value of cloth goods, the EIC switched its trading commodity from silver to illegal opium in the 19th century. This led to the First Opium War (1839-42).

£££££

## tea



In 1699, the EIC began to trade with China, where its main interest was tea. By 1750, some 2,150 tons of Chinese tea were traded for British silver a year.

£££££

CHINA

Calcutta

The capital of British territories in India until 1911

Canton

HONG KONG

EIC bases in China allowed them to fund the tea trade with illegal opium exports

Bombay

In 1668, Bombay was transferred to the EIC from King Charles II for an annual rent of £10



INDIA

SRILANKA

SUMATRA

JAKARTA

JAVA

Bantam

## porcelain



By the beginning of the 18th century, the EIC had established trade in China, buying in porcelain items such as 'custard cups', 'chocolate cups' and ornamental statues. Previously, such items had to be haggled for at Bantam market.

£££££

## pepper



The very first EIC expedition on 13 February 1601 set sail in search of pepper. It returned from the islands of Sumatra and Java in 1603, with four boats loaded with the spice. Later, the EIC would also establish a spice trade with China.

£££££

4,600

The approximate number of voyages made by EIC ships between 1600 and 1873, when the company was disbanded.



JAKARTA

Bantam

The site of the EIC's first factory – crucial in establishing power



## KEY

★ East India Company headquarters

£££££ Value of commodity



## TIME CAPSULE DECEMBER

# WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

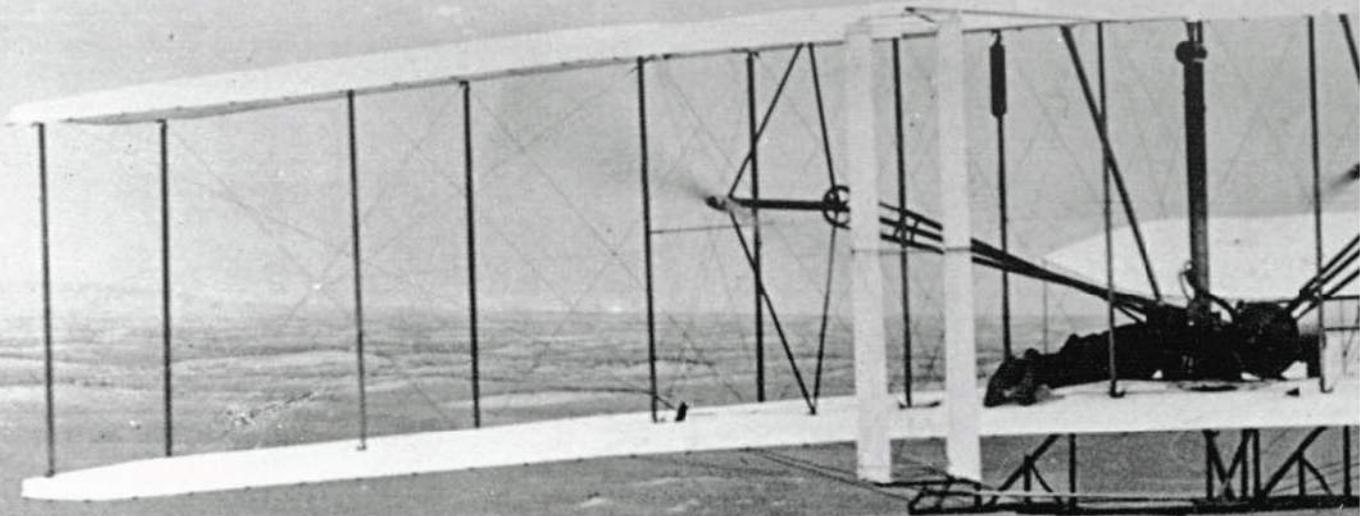
The first powered, heavier-than-air flight heralds the age of aviation

### REACH FOR THE STARS

When Apollo 11 landed on the Moon in 1969, **Neil Armstrong** was carrying a piece of muslin fabric from the first Wright Flyer inside his space suit, as well as a piece of wood from the craft's propeller.

# 1903 WRIGHT BROTHERS FLY INTO HISTORY

*It didn't get very high or very far, and it only survived one day, but Wilbur and Orville Wright's Flyer was a milestone moment in human flight...*



Orville and Wilbur Wright, in 1908, take readings before a flight

### WHEELS TO WINGS

The Wright Brothers funded their work on their aircraft – they built several gliders before their engine-propelled Flyer – by **running a bicycle repair shop**. Always the inventors, they began building and selling their own bicycles in 1896.

**T**he biting wind, at 27mph, may have been gusting harder than was ideal, but Wilbur and Orville Wright were determined to complete a test of their latest invention: a powered biplane. After all, they chose the Kill Devil Hills, a barren patch of land in North Carolina, as the site for their Flyer's inaugural flight specifically for its strong winds. So they set up the launch rail on the flat rather than an incline, and Orville climbed into position aboard the lower wing and took the controls.

At about 10.35am on that chilly morning of 17 December 1903, the Flyer lurched into life. For about 12 seconds. It came down with a bump some 36 metres away, which may not sound overly impressive, but it was enough to prove that the Wright Brothers had built an

aircraft – considered the first of its kind – that was powered and fully controlled by a pilot.

The American brothers, taking it turns at the controls, made three further flights that day reaching 53, 61 and, saving the best for last, 260 metres. They would have kept going, but while the brothers were celebrating the massive distance achieved by Wilbur, a gust of wind flipped the Flyer and caused severe damage. It was never flown again, yet in its short life, the first Wright Flyer ensured its place as one of history's most famous planes.

#### WING-WARPING

What made this creation so innovative? There were other, more-qualified engineers developing their own craft at the same time (it is even argued that one, Gustave Whitehead,

made a flight before the Wrights), but the Flyer's vital advance was that it could be controlled on all three axes needed for a successful airplane: pitch, roll and yaw. This was achieved by the pilot, while sat in a wooden cradle, bending the material of the 12-metre wings in a process called 'wing-warping', which – with the rudder and a hand lever – made all the difference when steering.

Over the next few years, the Wrights continued to refine their design, resulting, on 5 October 1905, with Wilbur making a 39-minute flight in their third Flyer. However, they didn't find commercial success until they travelled to France, where, by 1908, they were giving public demonstrations to wildly excited crowds. Aviation was taking off and the Wright Brothers were in the pilot's seat. ☺





## THE EXTRAORDINARY TALE OF...

How **George Robert Twelves Hewes** went from a royal subject to an American citizen

### RIPE OLD AGE

When Hewes passed away on 5 November 1840, he was 98 years old, but uncertainty over his age meant many believed him to be 109. He was buried unceremoniously but later reinterred in a cemetery for veterans.

# 1773 BOSTON HOSTS HISTORY'S MOST FAMOUS TEA PARTY

*On the wintry evening of 16 December 1773, a Boston shoemaker stood up against British oppression and became a patriot*

**H**aving hastily disguised themselves as Mohawk Native Americans – using coal dust to darken their skin and wearing feathers in their hair – a band of American patriots marched to Boston Harbor. On that cold evening of 16 December 1773, they climbed aboard three British ships docked there, calmly subdued the crews and dumped all 342 chests of tea from the holds into the water.

Causing £18,000 in losses (over a million dollars today), the 'Boston Tea Party' was an audacious protest against British taxes imposed on the American colonies. It was also one of three defining events to occur in Boston in the prelude to the American Revolutionary War, along with a massacre and a tarring-and-feathering. And one seemingly insignificant man was at the centre of all of them...

#### HOTBED OF RESENTMENT

George Robert Twelves Hewes, born to a large Bostonian family in 1742, was always poor. Since

being apprenticed to a shoemaker at the age of 14, Hewes remained in that lowly profession his whole life – his efforts to escape in his youth by enlisting in the army were thwarted by his short stature, standing at 5'1". So he bought his own shop, where he struggled to support his wife, Sally, and growing family, so much so that he spent time in debtors' prison. Despite his personal trials, however, Hewes couldn't ignore Boston's volatile political climate for long.

The Massachusetts town had long been a hotbed of resentment against British taxation, with tensions flaring between colonists and the several thousand British soldiers stationed there. This came to a head on 5 March 1770, when a mostly unarmed mob, including Hewes in its number, was fired upon outside Boston's Customs House. The scene on a snowy Kings Street was chaos, with five people fatally shot. Hewes, who sustained an injury to the shoulder by being hit with the butt of a gun, was standing

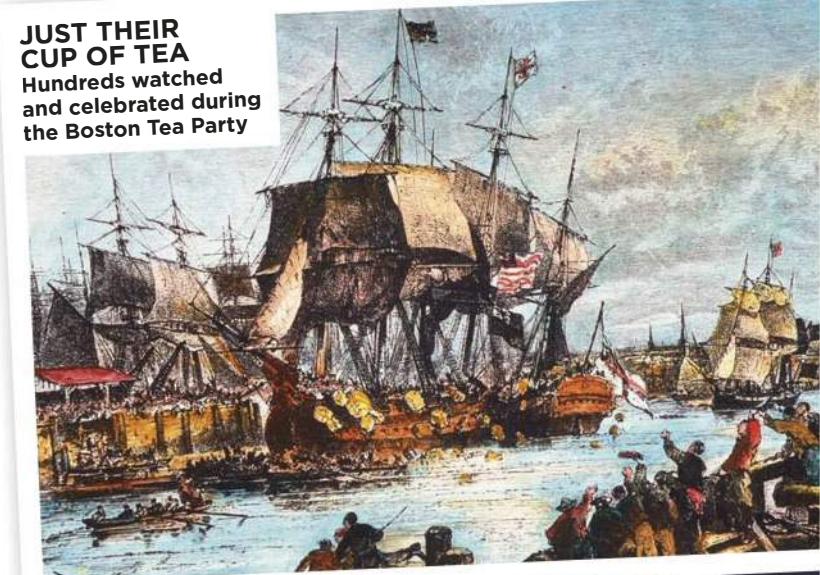
next to James Caldwell when he was killed and caught his body as it fell. The events of that night were labelled the 'Boston Massacre', and were recounted countless times as a powerful anti-British propaganda tool.

#### CAPTAIN HEWES

From then, Hewes was a devoted member of the Patriot movement, so was an eager volunteer for the Tea Party nearly four years later. The 60 or so men involved were split into three boarding crews, one for each ship, and Hewes' loyalty – or "whistling talent" as he claimed – was rewarded with his appointment to 'boatswain' (a de facto officer) of the party on the *Dartmouth*. It was Hewes



**JUST THEIR CUP OF TEA**  
Hundreds watched and celebrated during the Boston Tea Party



**"A nobody who briefly became a somebody in the Revolution and, for a moment near the end of his life, a hero."**

*Historian Alfred F Young, from The Shoemaker and the Tea Party (1999), a biography of George Robert Twelves Hewes*



**PATRIOT'S PORTRAIT**  
After finding fame, Hewes sat for this portrait by Joseph Cole in 1835, which hangs to this day in the Old State House in Boston



**“UNHAPPY BOSTON!”**  
A famous engraving of the Boston massacre by Henry Pelham – later copied by the great Patriot, Paul Revere

### A GOOD SOUL

Before the Boston Massacre, Hewes would try and keep the British on side with a swig of rum, but he once reported a soldier for cheating him out of a pair of shoes – for which **the man received 350 lashes**. Hewes was horrified at the severity of the punishment.

who demanded the keys from the ship's captain and supervised the dumping. He even reprimanded a fellow Patriot caught trying to smuggle tea in his coat. A member of his party later praised Hewes's leadership by declaring, "In the heat of conflict, the small man with the large name had been elevated from a poor shoemaker to Captain Hewes."

### TARRED AND FEATHERED

Not long after the destruction of the tea, Hewes was, again, a central character in a major political and widely publicised incident in Boston. In January 1774, Hewes witnessed customs official John Malcolm (a much-hated Bostonian and staunch Loyalist) threatening a young boy with his cane. When Hewes intervened, Malcolm struck him instead and "wounded him deeply on the forehead". Hewes had a scar the rest of his life. The attack was reported and, that same night, Malcolm was dragged from his house, stripped, then tarred and feathered.

The violent and extremely painful punishment, reported in many newspapers, was yet more evidence to the British Parliament that the situation in Boston was getting out of control, leading them to pass punitive laws in an attempt to restore order. What

they got was a revolution as Americans decided to end British rule and fight for independence.

### FAME AT LAST

During the eight-year American Revolutionary War, Hewes served as a privateer (hoping to make money from seized booty) and militiaman, while still providing for his family. His experiences weren't exactly eventful, but Hewes remained a revolutionary through and through. When the war was won in 1783, he was proud to say he had gone from subject under a monarchy to an equal citizen in a new nation – and it was a transformation he had been part of from the start.

Yet his story was nearly lost as Hewes fell back into obscurity, and poverty, after the war. He was in his 90s when 'discovered' and hailed to be one of the last living members of the Tea Party. He was hurled to fame after two biographies were written about him and, in 1835, Hewes – named the "venerable patriot" – was cheered as guest of honour at the Fourth of July celebrations in his former home town of Boston. ◉

**WHAT DO YOU THINK?**  
Do you know an extraordinary tale that we should tell next?  
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## THE BIG STORY ROMAN BRITAIN



ALAMY X4, GETTY X2

### ROUGH ROUND THE EDGE

Roman Britain may sound civilised enough but, across the sea at the edge of the Empire, life was a little more challenging than the invaders had hoped

### TIMELINE

Invasions, rebellions and



# THE ROMANS ARE COMING

BY MILES RUSSELL

## WHAT'S THE STORY?

For nearly four centuries, Britain was part of one of the largest empires of the ancient world. Today, it is easy to think of this period as a time of luxury and decadence, with well-groomed, Latin-speaking natives wholeheartedly embracing a more civilised, Mediterranean way of life. Needless to say, it wasn't completely like this. Not everyone appreciated the Roman way of doing things.

Unified by a single currency, a wealthy elite prospered, while the poor simply struggled to get by. It was a place where fine

art and architecture certainly flourished, but only for those with money. Politicians were corrupt (and often did little to disguise the fact), big business was built on family connections and the justice system clearly favoured the powerful. Europe, Africa and Asia were periodically wracked by rioting, unrest and civil conflict while mass-migration and disease tore at the very fabric of society.

Sound familiar? Welcome to the Roman Empire's most distant, northerly province: welcome to Britannia.

**THE ROMANS IN BRITAIN**  
The Romans in Britain and barbaric attacks - Rome's 367-year rule in Britain was hardly a civilised affair...

**HADRIAN'S WALL: LIFE ON THE EDGE OF THE EMPIRE**  
In the second century AD, the Emperor of Rome ordered the construction of a wall to secure the northernmost border of his empire. It was to be the greatest single building project ever seen in Europe. Miles Russell reveals...

**MILES RUSSELL**  
A Senior Lecturer in prehistoric and Roman archaeology at Bournemouth University, Miles has over 30 years experience in the field and 13 books to his name. He's also a common face on our TV screens, having appeared on numerous BBC, Channel 4 and Sky documentaries.

## NOW READ ON...

### NEED TO KNOW

- 1 First Contact p28
- 2 The Conquest p29
- 3 Regime Change p30
- 4 Everyday Life p32
- 5 Highs and Lows p36

### TIMELINE

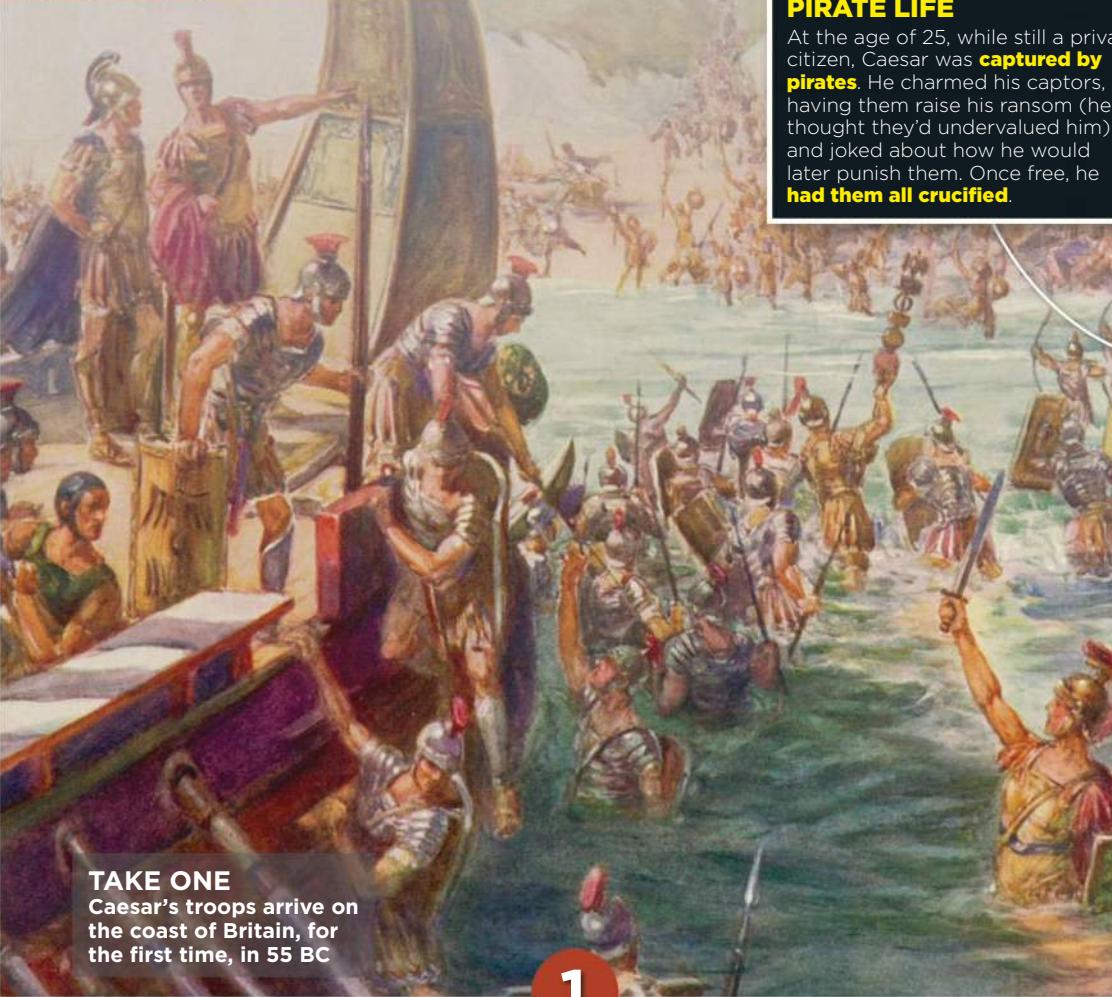
Four centuries of invasions, rebellions and barbaric attacks in Roman Britain p38

### HADRIAN'S WALL

Life on the edge of the Empire p41

### GET HOOKED

There's more to see, read and do p47



**TAKE ONE**  
Caesar's troops arrive on the coast of Britain, for the first time, in 55 BC

1

## FIRST CONTACT

*Whose original idea was it to cross the Channel, and why did they?*

**W**ith a shout that was almost inaudible over the roar of the approaching enemy, the Eagle Bearer of the 10th Legion leapt from the prow of his ship and into the churning waves below. Surfacing almost immediately, he started forward, choking and struggling on through the swell to the shore where a mass of fierce, blue-tattooed warriors was waiting. Spurred into life by his actions, the first line of Roman legionaries quickly followed, falling headlong into the surf and marching on towards almost certain death. It was late summer 55 BC and Britain was about to emerge kicking and screaming onto the pages of history.

The isles of Britain had seemed an obvious target for the Roman general Julius Caesar who, by 55 BC had subjugated the tribes of Gaul (France) and led his troops across the Rhine River into Germany. No Roman army had ever crossed the mysterious 'ocean' at the very edge

of the civilised world, and Caesar was nothing if not a daring glory-seeker.

Truth be told, neither of his expeditions to Britain, in 55 and 54 BC, were a great success, at least in military and economic terms. During the first invasion, Caesar found himself trapped on the beaches of Kent, hemmed in on all sides by the enemy. He could only watch helplessly as reinforcements were scattered by a storm at sea and his own transport vessels were dashed to pieces on the shore. Luckily for the Roman, the Britons sued for peace, allowing the invaders to retreat in hastily repaired ships.

Within a year, Caesar was back. He hoped to defeat the Britons in open battle and capture a British town. He achieved both of these, but at a great cost of lives. At the end of the campaign, the General left for Gaul taking hostages, promises of protection money (termed 'tribute') and assurances that those who had submitted to him would enjoy enhanced trade status and power as client kingdoms of Rome, providing the Empire with a degree of security along its northern barbarian frontier.

### PIRATE LIFE

At the age of 25, while still a private citizen, Caesar was **captured by pirates**. He charmed his captors, having them raise his ransom (he thought they'd undervalued him) and joked about how he would later punish them. Once free, he **had them all crucified**.



### GAIUS JULIUS CAESAR

**CAESAR** (c100-44BC)

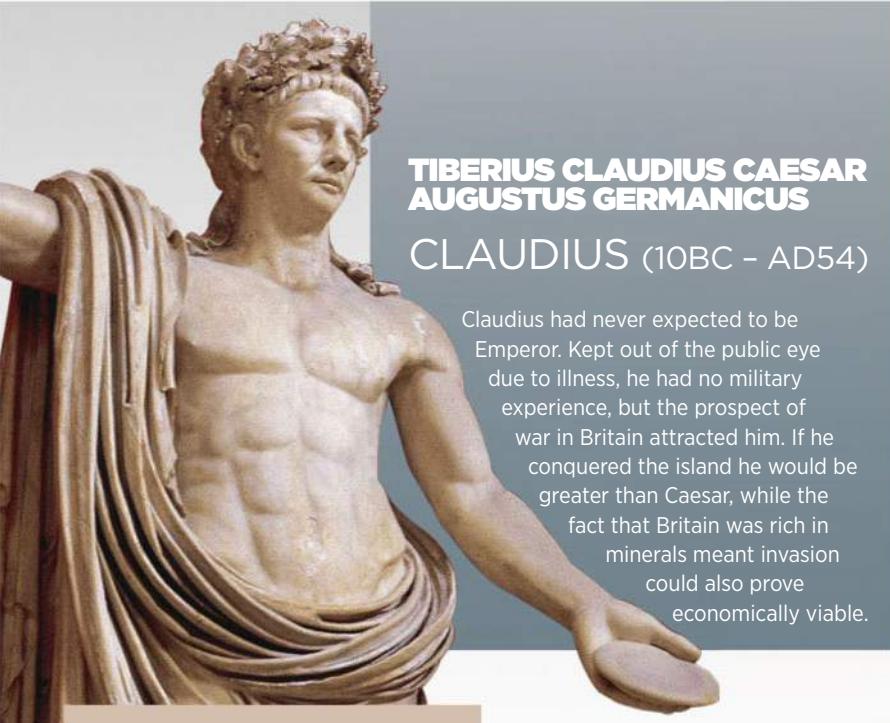
Julius Caesar was an ambitious politician. In 58 BC, he took command of Roman territory in southern Gaul (France), which he used as a springboard for conquest. His seven-year campaign across Gaul killed over a million civilians, while perhaps a million more were taken as slaves, all in the name of self-promotion. War brought profit and status; Caesar badly needed both.

## THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Of all the ancient cities of the Mediterranean, Rome was the great survivor. Spending much of its early life under attack by one rival state or another, Rome learned how to fight and stay alive. Having disposed of its ruling monarchy in 509 BC, the city viewed itself as unique for being a republic, governed by a senate who spoke and acted (at least in theory) on behalf of the people.

By the first century BC, this republic was fast becoming an empire, having smashed its main rival, Carthage, and acquiring territory in Spain, Sicily, Sardinia, the south of France, North Africa and Greece. Now, men such as Julius Caesar were spreading Roman power out into the 'savage' world of northern Europe.





**TIBERIUS CLAUDIUS CAESAR AUGUSTUS GERMANICUS**

## CLAUDIUS (10BC – AD54)

Claudius had never expected to be Emperor. Kept out of the public eye due to illness, he had no military experience, but the prospect of war in Britain attracted him. If he conquered the island he would be greater than Caesar, while the fact that Britain was rich in minerals meant invasion could also prove economically viable.

**CLOSE TO GOD**  
Claudius is imagined as the ultimate Roman God, Jupiter, in this statue found in the Vatican Museum

2

# THE CONQUEST

*Britain may have been partially Romanised, but it was far from conquered*

**W**hen, in 44 BC, Caesar was assassinated, it triggered a period of civil war. The tumultuous era ended in 31 BC, when Caesar's grand-nephew and adopted son, Augustus, found himself in charge. He, along with the emperors who followed, needed to show Rome's power in both politics and war, especially against the 'barbarians' of northern Europe. Prestige and swift economic returns – in the form of slaves, tribute, booty and a range of natural resources – could be won if Rome's armies pushed north. The question for Augustus and his successors, Tiberius, Caligula and Claudius, was who exactly could they legitimately pick a fight with?

Britain was an attractive opportunity for Emperor Claudius. He needed both a solid victory, to establish his military credentials, and to effect regime change on those British kings who were threatening the pro-Roman monarchies of southern England. An expedition, led by the General Aulus Plautius (Claudius remained back in Rome making further preparations), landed on the south coast in AD 43. Unfortunately we don't know exactly where these troops disembarked (it may have been in Kent, Sussex or Hampshire), although, as a key goal of the campaign was to restore the displaced King Verica of the Atrebates tribe, which lay in what is now northern Hampshire, a landing in the natural harbours of Portsmouth or Chichester seems likely.

Sadly for Plautius, things swiftly unravelled as his expedition encountered serious resistance. Identifying the key player in the insurgency as a Briton named Caratacus, Plautius sent word to Claudius for reinforcements. These duly arrived, together with the

Emperor himself and, to add a certain dramatic flair to the campaign, a number of elephants. Emboldened, the Roman force took Caratacus's capital of Camulodunum (now Colchester) where Rome received the surrender of 11 British rulers. Leaving Britain after a stay of around two weeks, Claudius instructed his General to "subjugate all the remaining areas". The problem for Plautius was that Caratacus had escaped and, despite Rome's best efforts, it would take nearly a decade to track him down.

Wales, it is fair to say, caused Rome some major problems. First, in chasing the errant King Caratacus, the Roman state found itself embroiled in a campaign that proved both difficult and time consuming. Caratacus was finally captured, after transferring the theatre of war into north Wales and thence into the north of England, in AD 51.

Nevertheless, the fierce tribes of southern Wales – the Silures in particular – fought on for another two violent decades.

4

The number of legions that formed part of General Aulus Plautius's invasion force – that's over 20,000 men



**BRITISH RESISTANCE**  
Caratacus was the man who refused to let Britain go without a fight

## TURN HIM OVER

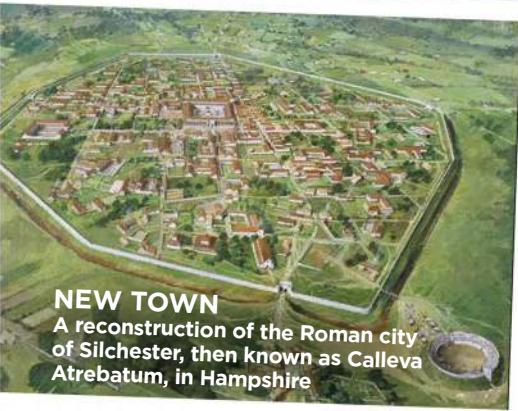
The Romans finally caught Caratacus when the Queen of the Brigantes in Northern England betrayed him. He sought refuge with her, only to find himself handed over to the Romans.





## STYLE BRITANNIA

As the invaders imposed their culture onto Britain's 'barbaric' tribes, there was a clear merging of ideas and styles, as these artefacts show...



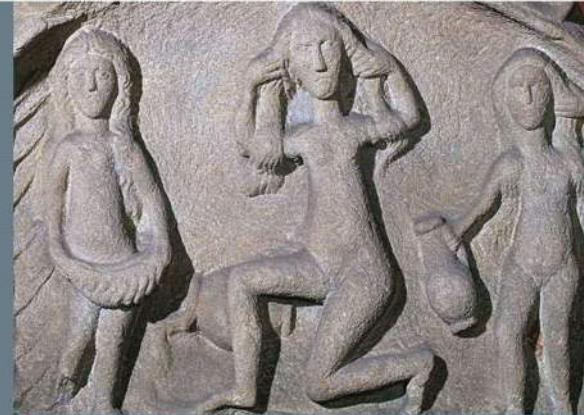
NEW TOWN

A reconstruction of the Roman city of Silchester, then known as Calleva Atrebatum, in Hampshire



### 1. RUDSTON VENUS MOSAIC

A prime example of Roman design executed from an explicitly Celtic mindset, there is nothing classical about this wild, pear-shaped Venus. Naked but for two bracelets, she hurls a mirror to one side as a Triton (holding a badly drawn torch) looks on.



### 2. HIGH ROCHESTER SCULPTURE

Whether this depicts Venus at her bath or three water deities, the overall effect is a striking fusion of Roman ideas (the figurative sculpture) and Celtic imagery (the blank faces, enlarged heads and pear-shaped figures), and is a masterpiece of early British art.

3

## REGIME CHANGE

*Those who welcomed the Romans stood to gain, but many fought back against their invaders*

**B**ritain of the Iron Age was littered with a patchwork of tribes, each with their own outlooks, identities and allegiances. Sadly, this prehistoric society remains a mystery and we know little about how the tribes were organised or what they thought of themselves or their leaders. The names we possess for the different tribes, such as the Iceni, the Atrebates and the Catuvellauni, are those recorded by the Romans. As such it is likely that, in establishing this framework, the invaders recognised only the larger political groups.

The real tribal map of Iron Age Britain was no doubt simplified by the Romans, who preferred the idea of single groups occupying particular areas under the rule of individual leaders.

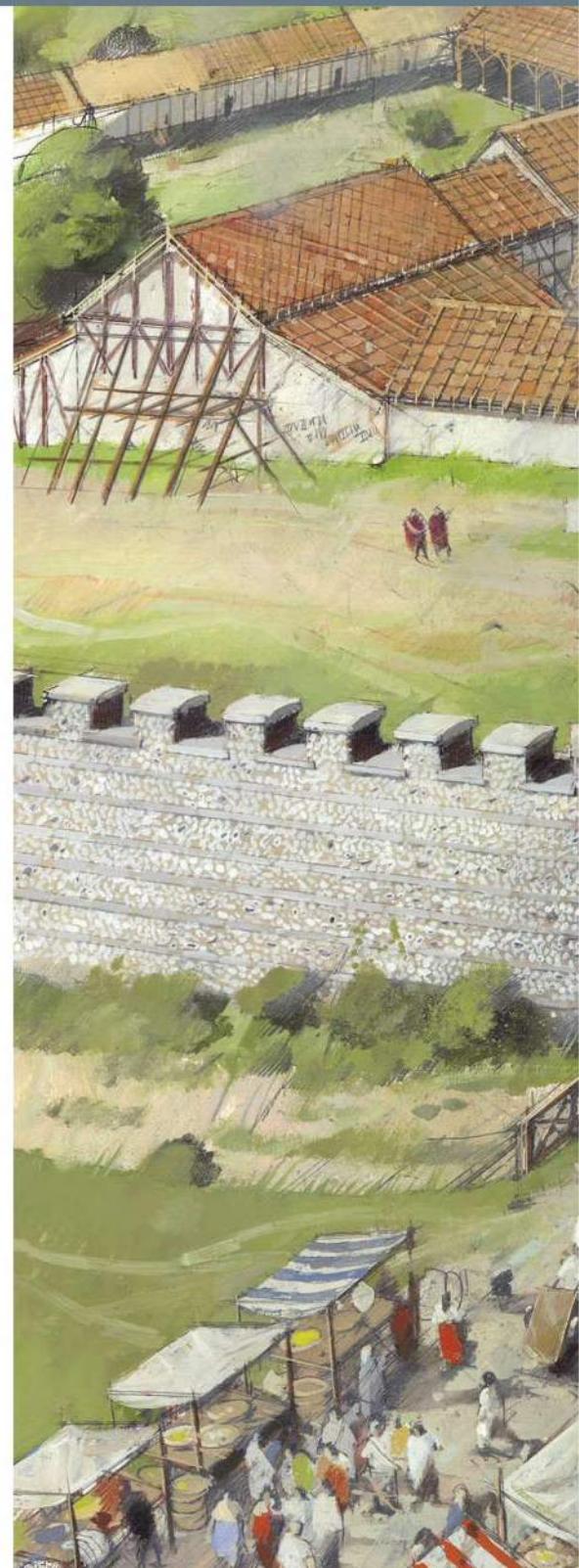
It's probable that the names we use today for the 'tribes' of Britain were no more than the identifiers of each particular ruling dynasty. A 'tribe' could simply have been those who owed allegiance to a specific king and not necessarily always a discrete ethnic or cultural group.

As Rome moved into, what was for them, the unknown upland regions of the west (the Cotswolds, Devon, Cornwall and Wales), they left something of a power-gap in the southern lowlands of England. In the absence of a garrison, the long-term stability of land acquired by Rome was guaranteed by the establishment of client states – tribal kingdoms that maintained a semi-autonomous existence under the watchful eyes of the Roman state.

In the immediate aftermath of the invasion, five tribes in particular seem to have benefited directly from Roman patronage to a lesser or greater degree: the Iceni, the Brigantes, the Atrebates, the Regni and the Catuvellauni.

The elevation of these tribal players in the years immediately following the invasion is clear enough. The Catuvellauni, Atrebates and Regni were all provided with the infrastructure of local government in the form of new towns – Silchester, St Albans and Chichester respectively, all showing evidence of early street grids and bathhouses. St Albans and Silchester may well have had high-status domestic structures established for their ruling elite within the area of the new cities, while Chichester had one close by at Fishbourne (see page 34).

Few Romano-British towns could really be judged a success, as the British never fully became an urbanized society. New towns operated as tribal centres run, in most instances, by surviving elements of native society, to whom Rome had delegated authority. These leaders oversaw the implementation of the justice system and decided who lived, who died and how much tax everyone paid. Towns were centres of trade and commerce – places where the old gods continued to be worshipped, albeit within new stone temples. This was where the wealthy and powerful lived in their big houses; where agricultural produce was brought, bartered and stored. The Britons had been provided with the skeleton of urban life by the state, but it is fair to say that they fleshed it out in very unRoman ways.





### 3. BATH MEDUSA

This unique, mustachioed, ocean-dwelling version of Medusa, originally from a great classical temple to Minerva, has writhing snakes, sea-lions and dolphins for hair, but also the doleful, bulging-eyed, other-worldly expression typically found in Celtic art-forms.



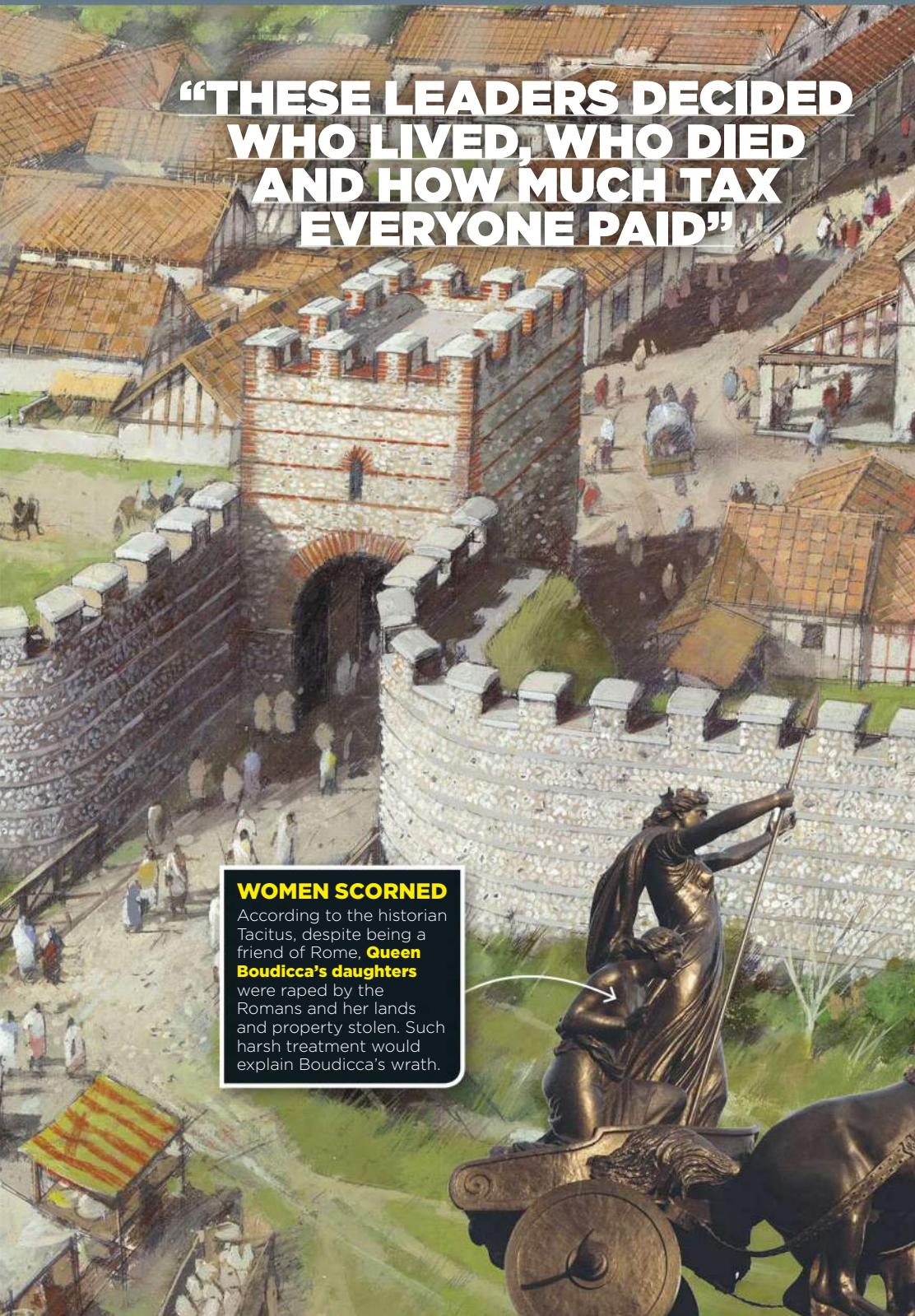
### 4. COLCHESTER GLADIATOR POT

The images on this Nene-Valley jar are undeniably Roman, with two fighters in the arena, but the curious body-proportions, stylised animals, swirling whips and floral spray resemble the Celtic art found on pre-Roman bronze-work.



### 5. ALDBOROUGH MOSAIC

Rome's origin story, that of Romulus and Remus suckled by a she-wolf, is here given the 'British-treatment': a grinning, human-faced wolf leans casually with crossed-legs by an ill-shaped fig tree as the twins levitate towards her belly. A wonderful piece of artistic fusion.



#### WOMEN SCORNED

According to the historian Tacitus, despite being a friend of Rome, Queen Boudicca's daughters were raped by the Romans and her lands and property stolen. Such harsh treatment would explain Boudicca's wrath.



## FIGHT THE POWER

### BOUDICCA

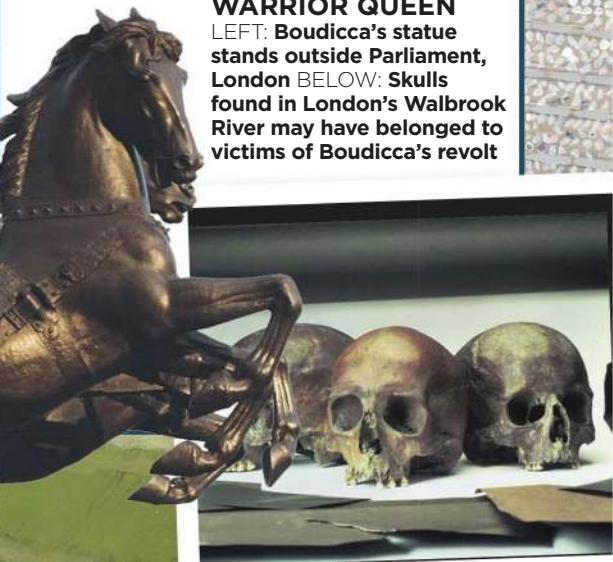
The Iceni, who occupied land in what is now Norfolk, possessed a somewhat privileged early relationship with Rome, being left alone by the legions, as their ruling elite received gifts of silver and gold to keep them quiet. When their King Prasutagus died in AD 60, however, the Roman government ended this special status, sending in the army to seize land and property and treat the Iceni as an occupied people. By late AD 60, the whole tribe was in open revolt.

Led by the recently widowed Queen Boudicca, the Iceni were joined by the Trinovantes (of Essex) who had also lost out in the years following the invasion of AD 43. Together the rebels fell upon the newly established Roman towns of Colchester, London and St Albans, looting, slaughtering and leaving havoc in their wake. The province was in turmoil, and Roman troops sent to pacify the region were ambushed and destroyed.

The Roman Governor, Paullinus, who was in the middle of a campaign in north Wales, made a hasty return to southern Britain with as many troops as he could muster. In a final desperate battle, the well-disciplined Roman soldiers defeated Boudicca's army of insurgents. Peace was eventually restored, but some 500,000 civilians died in the uprising and the reprisals that followed.

#### WARRIOR QUEEN

LEFT: Boudicca's statue stands outside Parliament, London BELOW: Skulls found in London's Walbrook River may have belonged to victims of Boudicca's revolt





#### HORSE POWER

This charioteer mosaic from c350 AD, found at Rudston, East Yorkshire, suggests that Britons were fans of the Roman games

4

## EVERYDAY LIFE

Once conquered, what was life like for the average Romano-Briton?

**W**hether the way of life offered by Rome was considered oppressive and to be feared, or a welcome change, offering access to new luxury products and providing the chance to get rich, ultimately depended on who you were, what you wanted from life, how much cash you had and what you had to lose. The adoption of a Roman culture was necessary for success under the new regime, but such 'success' was not a priority for everyone. Many members of native society were probably not all that enthusiastic about Rome and few would immediately have seen the benefit in changing their way of life and identity.

In some parts of Britain, notably the far north and west, rural settlement was largely unaffected by Rome. Yes, there were towns and villas, particularly in the south and east, but the degree of Roman culture here is insubstantial when compared to other parts of the Empire. In Italy, over a third of the population lived in towns, while in Britain it was less than a tenth. Given that there were probably somewhere between 3 and 4 million people living in Roman

Britain by the third century AD, it's fair to say that the large majority were unfamiliar with the Mediterranean concept of towns.

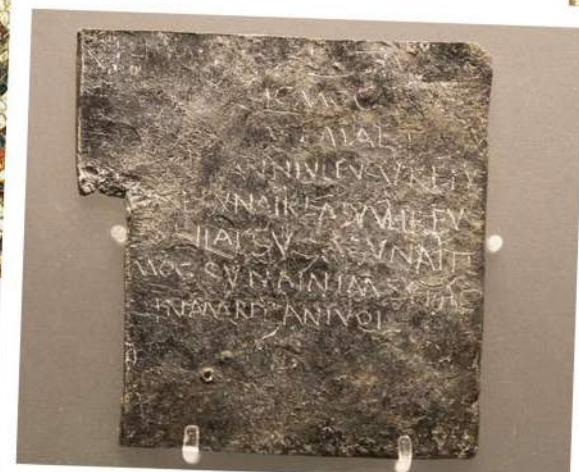
Few of the new urban centres established in Britain ever became quite what the Romans would have hoped. The forum and basilica complexes at the heart of most towns (for trade and administration) were given over to 'squatter' accommodation, metalworking and farming activities (such as animal husbandry).

Villas, the high status Romanised rural houses, were also relatively low in number across the province. As with colonial homes built by European settlers in 19th-century India, Africa and the Americas, it is possible that many such buildings were created for colonising officials, entrepreneurs and pioneers from Rome, who were keen to exploit the new territory, rather than for the native elite.

**MONEY TALKS**  
An ancient coin from the flourishing Catuvellauni tribe of south-east England, from c40-20 BC



**SPEAKING IN CURSES**  
Latin was the language of choice on this curse tablet, which complains about a theft and names the possible culprits



#### TONGUE TIED LANGUAGES

As they didn't write anything down, we don't know what language (or languages) the pre-Roman British societies spoke. However, it is likely that the native elite began to learn Latin just before the invasion, as it was Roman policy to educate the families of friendly monarchs. Inevitably, once the island joined the Roman Empire, Latin spread, although it's hard to be sure just how literate the population became, as comparatively few inscriptions have been found, when compared with other provinces.

Occasionally, examples of Latin graffiti are found, but this alone doesn't tell us much about literacy rates in Britain, especially if those doing the defacing had come from elsewhere in the Empire. Within the military, Latin was the language that bound different ethnic groups together, much as English would later become the binding form of communication in native regiments serving in the army of the British Empire, and the evidence of it within forts is greater than that from the towns.

## RELIGION

Generally speaking, Rome was happy to tolerate all religions it encountered, and native cults, gods and goddesses were absorbed into the imperial belief system. Although the Romans were deeply superstitious, toleration was useful as a society whose religious beliefs are welcomed is far less likely to rebel. In its acceptance of native practices, the Roman state successfully absorbed British deities, merging them with well-known (and more acceptable) Mediterranean equivalents. Hence, in the city of Bath we discover the goddess 'Sulis Minerva'; Minerva was the Roman deity associated with wisdom, craft activities, war and healing, while Sulis, it would appear, was her local Iron Age equivalent, the goddess of the hot spring, which bubbled up to the surface.

In order to Romanise British gods, and introduce some of their own, the government built a whole series of urban and rural temples: structures where specific deities could be contacted and asked for help in the mortal realm.



**POPULAR EPONA**  
A Celtic-Roman goddess of horses, who was ultimately worshipped across Europe



## WASH AND GO

The Roman site at Wall was a **key staging post** on Watling Street – the road to North Wales. It had all the essentials for an **overnight stop** – an inn and, of course, a bathhouse.

SOCIAL CLUBS  
THE BATHHOUSE

Every Roman town had at least one major public bathing amenity, which, in the absence of pubs, restaurants and nightclubs, would have acted as the foremost social spot in town.

The bathhouses followed the same basic design throughout the Empire, with a range of rooms of varying temperature, and functioned in much the same way as a modern Turkish bath or Swedish sauna. Starting in the cold room, a bather was anointed with oils before moving through progressively hotter rooms, scraping the sweat and oil from their body, finishing with the hot and cold immersion baths.



**AT THE RACES**  
Britain's only known Roman race track, at Colchester, as it may have looked in its heyday

BLOOD SPORTS  
ENTERTAINMENT

Gladiatorial combat was the most popular spectator 'sport' in the Empire, helping to entertain the mob and alleviate their blood lust. Beast hunts and the execution of criminals were also staged in urban amphitheatres in front of large audiences. Theatres, if they are to be found at all, staged less-popular plays and religious ceremonies. Chariot racing was the premier sport of Rome, requiring a lengthy race-track called the circus. Curiously, despite the apparent love that the Britons had for equestrian activities, only one circus has been found in Britain, at Colchester in Essex.

TURN OVER TO SEE  
HOW THE UPPER  
CLASSES LIVED...



## THE LAP OF LUXURY

### FISHBOURNE PALACE

While most Britons were making do with the simple pleasures that Roman life brought, others were living in style. The ruin of Fishbourne Palace, West Sussex, offers a glimpse inside the world of the upper classes. In its main phase, in the late first century AD, the site would have boasted a huge central courtyard, formal gardens, a public wing, an impressive apsed dining room, a private range and a guest wing arranged around a series of discrete apartments. It also contains some of the earliest and most lavish examples of mosaic and decorated wall plaster found in Britain.

#### SIZE MATTERS

At just over 150 metres square, the footprint of the complex is greater than that of Buckingham Palace. To someone brought up in Rome, such an extravagant repertoire of decorative and architectural features would have appeared quite normal, but to the indigenous Briton, all this colour and fancy stonework would have been mind-blowing.



#### MAKE AN ENTRANCE

The original entrance to the palace was via a large hall, set on the central axis of the east wing. To the north of this was a range of offices and a large hall for semi-public assemblies and meetings between the outside world and representatives of the palace. Space to the south was dominated by a luxurious bathing suite.

#### GREEN PATCH

The main entrance led out to a large open courtyard. Excavation has revealed the bedding trenches for an ornamental hedge, a horticultural innovation that may well mark the beginnings of the British obsession for gardening.



**ROMAN ENGINEERING**  
An underfloor heating system known as a hypocaust kept the Romano-Britons of Fishbourne Palace warm

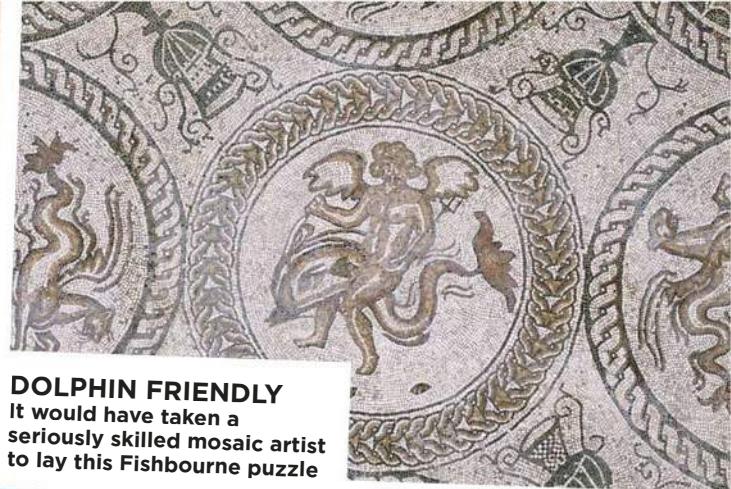
#### ACCOMMODATION BLOCK

In the north wing, two courtyards formed the focus for three apartments, each with their own bedrooms, dining and reception rooms. These may have been guest suites for important visitors, or private residential quarters used by more than one family.



### CENTRE STAGE

The western wing, with reception and entertainment areas, was built on a raised platform so that it would dominate the complex. The main focus of the space was a large dining room (*triclinium*) with an apse designed to hold a curved couch (*stibadium*) where guests could sit, eat, chat and enjoy various forms of between-course entertainment.



### DOLPHIN FRIENDLY

It would have taken a seriously skilled mosaic artist to lay this Fishbourne puzzle

## GRAND DESIGNS

# ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The late-first-century palace was developed from an earlier Mediterranean-style courtyard house, constructed at some point in the mid-60s AD. This house, although small by the later standards of the palace, possessed an exquisite level of internal décor, comprising lavish columns topped with Corinthian and Tuscan capitals, painted wall plaster, marble from eastern France and Italy, black and white geometric mosaics and other pavements of exotic cut stone.

The later palace, which swept away the earlier house, represented a step up in the level of architectural refinement and artistic style. In the public rooms, the opulence was made obvious with intricate geometric mosaic floors, which emulated the latest trends in Italy, while the walls were adorned with brightly painted frescos. Expensive decoration was still being added in the third century AD – the 'Boy on a Dolphin' mosaic (above), one of the finest floors to survive from Roman Britain, was created in this period.

## WHO LIVED IN A HOUSE LIKE THIS?

The palace's owner is something of a mystery. It may have been an administrator, state official, businessman or merchant desperate for the comforts of his Roman home. Or perhaps someone who had aided the Roman cause, such as a key British aristocrat. It is tempting to link the palace to two historical figures: Tiberius Claudius Togidubnus, a man cited on an inscription from Chichester as a "Great King of the Britons", and Tiberius Claudius Catuarus, a wealthy Brit whose name was inscribed on a gold ring – an indicator of extremely high social standing – found around 250 metres to the east of the palace (pictured above). Only an inscription from the site, specifically citing ownership, will ever really resolve the issue.

### RING OF TRUTH

Does this ring provide a clue as to the original owner of Fishbourne?



### ART HOUSE

Intricate mosaic borders (above) and mythical creatures (left) adorn the floors at Fishbourne



**“AFTER FOUR CENTURIES  
OF OCCUPATION, THE  
ROMAN WORLD HAD VERY  
LITTLE LASTING IMPACT  
ON THE BRITISH PUBLIC”**



**PRIME TIME**  
Construction on Lullingstone  
Villa, Kent, began in the first  
century AD, during Roman  
Britain's Golden Age

5

## HIGHS AND LOWS

*For a while, Britain proved a beneficial colony for Rome. But all good things to come to an end...*

**E**conomically speaking, Britain proved to be a very useful contributor to the Roman Empire. Its mineral reserves, especially the lead, gold, tin, copper and iron, were all successfully exploited, while the agriculturally rich lowlands produced significant amounts of grain and beef.

All these benefits have to be offset, however, against the disadvantages. There was the cost of maintaining a large military presence in the island to consider, plus the expenditure associated with large building projects, such as

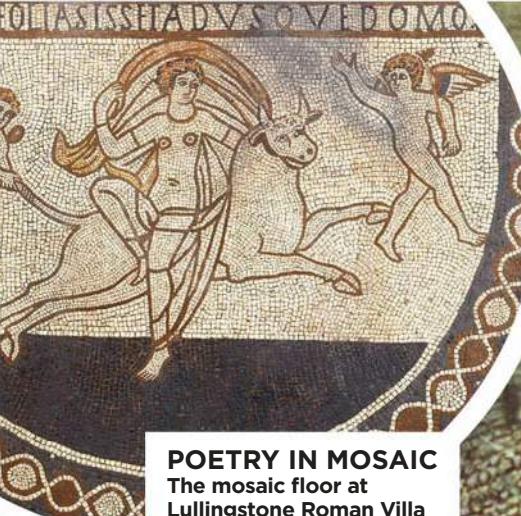
the new towns and the development of state-of-the-art frontier systems like Hadrian's Wall (see page 41).

From a social perspective, the Roman experiment was something of a failure, as it would appear that only a minority of the British population fully and enthusiastically adopted Roman lifestyles and identity. Even after almost four centuries of occupation, the Roman world had very little lasting impact upon the wider British public. It was only the merchants, soldiers, wealthy native

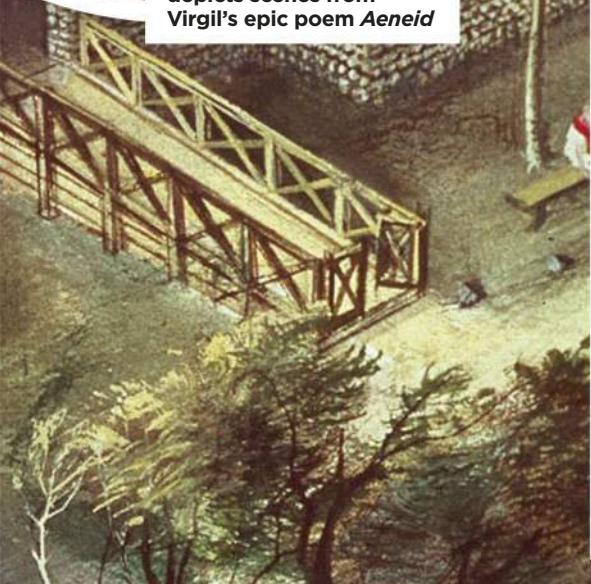
elite and those in the civil service that zealously adopted Roman culture. With this in mind, it makes sense that, during the third and fourth centuries AD, Britain regularly attempted to break with Rome. Indeed, at the very end of the period, in AD 409, it was initially the British authorities who decided on a period of formal separation, electing to go their own way. In this respect, it should be unsurprising that virtually nothing of the Roman way of life survived into the 'post-Roman' period to influence the development of England, Scotland and Wales.

10

The percentage  
of Rome's entire  
military that was  
permanently based  
in Britain



**POETRY IN MOSAIC**  
The mosaic floor at Lullingstone Roman Villa depicts scenes from Virgil's epic poem *Aeneid*



## WHAT REMAINS OF THE GOOD TIMES? THE GOLDEN AGE

For the wealthy Roman elite in Britain, the third and fourth centuries AD were a Golden Age of abundance and prosperity, the prime example of the period being the villa. The nouveau riche poured money into their Roman-style homes in the most extravagant ways possible; being Roman was all about show and showing off. Of the 1,000 or so villas so far identified in Britain, most hit their peak in the fourth century AD, when they added ostentatious bathing suites, ornate dining rooms and entertainment spaces, all dripping with expensive internal decor, especially mosaics.

The majority of villas in Britain were at the centre of successful farming estates, profits generated from the selling of an agricultural surplus providing the necessary cash for home improvement. In this respect, the Roman villas of lowland Britain can perhaps be better compared with the grand estates, country houses and stately homes of the landed gentry in the Britain of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. Such houses represented monumental statements of power designed to dominate the land and impress all

who passed by. As the home of a successful landowner wishing to attain a certain level of social standing and recognition, the stately home or country house was the grand, architectural centrepiece of a great agricultural estate, where the owner could enhance their art collection, develop business opportunities, dispense the law and dabble in politics. In this respect, the Roman villa was probably little different.

In the towns, the wealthy and successful created not only well-appointed town houses, complete with colourful mosaics and painted wall-plaster, but also sponsored public buildings and established temples and other places of worship, such as later churches. Not all of this was wholly altruistic, however. The very public, and clearly acknowledged, establishment of amenities and facilities 'for the greater good', such as bathhouses, drinking fountains and statues, all helped foster political advantage and generate support in career advancement, something vital for those determined to better themselves in the Golden Age.

## WHAT THE ROMANS DID (AND DIDN'T) DO FOR US

### 1. CULTURE

Roman culture never fully embedded itself within Britain and had no real impact upon the people and period that followed. Society in the east became influenced by new Germanic forms of art and culture, as people in the west reverted to more 'Celtic' influences.



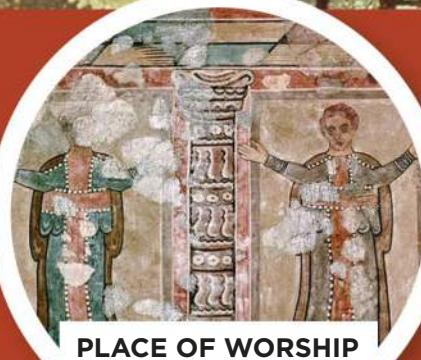
**EASTERN STYLE**  
An early Anglo-Saxon brooch found in Kent



**MARKED IN LATIN**  
A Roman milestone from c120 AD, found by an old toll gate in Leicestershire

### 2. LANGUAGE

Outside the military system, urban inscriptions and later the Church, Latin probably had limited impact on the inhabitants of Britain. Unlike in Italy, France and Spain, Latin didn't influence the languages that followed, although the alphabet did.



**PLACE OF WORSHIP**  
A Christian wall painting, found in Lullingstone Villa, Kent, from c350 AD

### 3. RELIGION

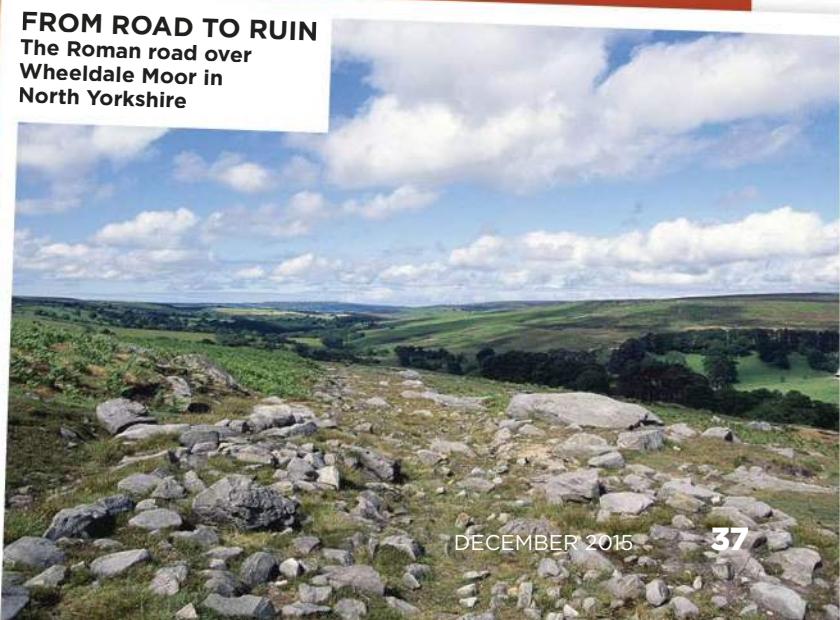
Christianity arrived in Britain towards the end of the Roman period. It didn't replace existing faiths – in most areas it existed alongside other belief systems. Christianity as we know it today was reintroduced by the Roman Catholic church in the sixth century AD.

### 4. LANDSCAPE

Some towns survived beyond the Roman period as centres of early Medieval trade while the road network, in certain areas, formed the basis of post-Roman communication networks.

### FROM ROAD TO RUIN

The Roman road over Wheeldale Moor in North Yorkshire





# TIMELINE The Romans in

Invasions, rebellions and barbaric attacks – Rome's 367-year rule in Britain



## 55-54 BC

Roman General Julius Caesar leads two expeditions into southern Britain. Although militarily disastrous – Caesar never achieves any real victory – he is hailed a hero in Rome for successfully taking an army across 'the ocean' at the edge of the civilised world.

## AD 43

Emperor Claudius initiates the full conquest of southern Britain under the command of General Aulus Plautius. In doing so, Claudius knows he will be acclaimed as a leader greater than Caesar who, by now, has been officially declared a god.

## AD 51

Caractacus, leader of the British resistance, is finally captured after eight years on the run. During this time, he led a series of hit-and-run attacks on the Romans. With his capture, Claudius believes Britain is secure.



The British rebel warrior Caractacus is delivered to Emperor Claudius in Rome



## AD 286-96

Britain cedes from Rome, establishing its own breakaway Empire, with its own army, coinage and resources, under the rule of the rogue General Carausius. Rome loses Britain for a decade until, after a renewed invasion, Carausius's successor Allectus is defeated.

## AD 208-11

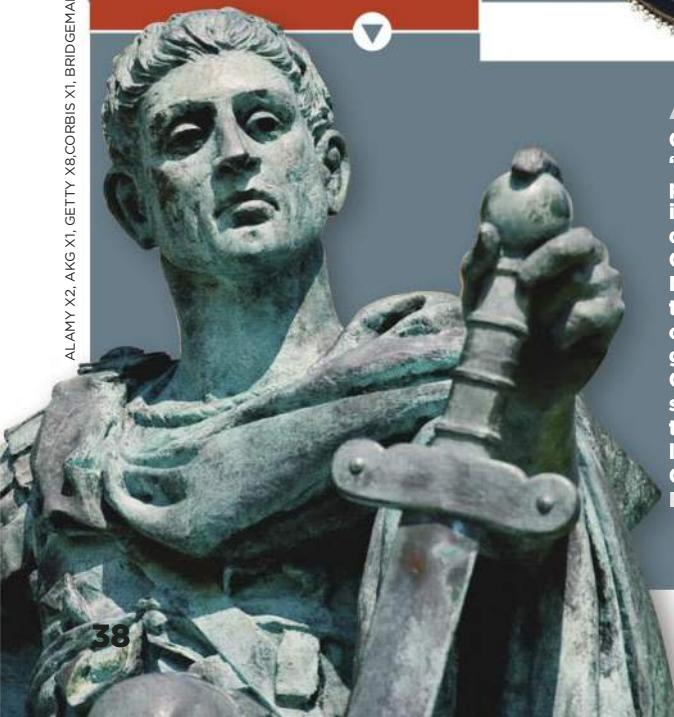
The Emperor Septimius Severus arrives in Britain, setting up the imperial court in the city of York. Keen to gain a great victory against the northern tribes, Severus starts a doomed campaign. Following much loss of life and with no significant military gain, Severus dies at York and his sons return to Rome.

Emperor Severus and his family



## AD 180

Hadrian's Wall is overrun by a mass of tribes who cause devastation to a large area in northern England. A Roman victory is only achieved four years later after much fighting.



## AD 306

Constantine (later 'the Great') is proclaimed Emperor in York following the death of his father Constantius. Marching south, taking a large part of the British garrison with him, Constantine finally seizes the imperial throne in AD 312 and later converts to Christianity, the first Emperor to do so.

## AD 367

Roman Britain is overwhelmed by the 'Great Barbarian Conspiracy' of invading Picts (from what is now Scotland), Scots (from Ireland) and Saxons (from Germany, Denmark and southern Scandinavia). The military and civilian infrastructure never fully recovers.

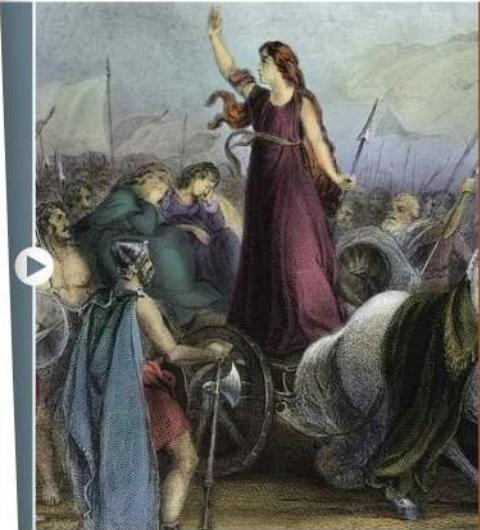
## AD 383

Magnus Maximus, a general in Britain, is proclaimed Emperor by his troops. Removing large numbers of soldiers across the Channel in order to fight his cause on the continent, the British garrison is never reinforced.



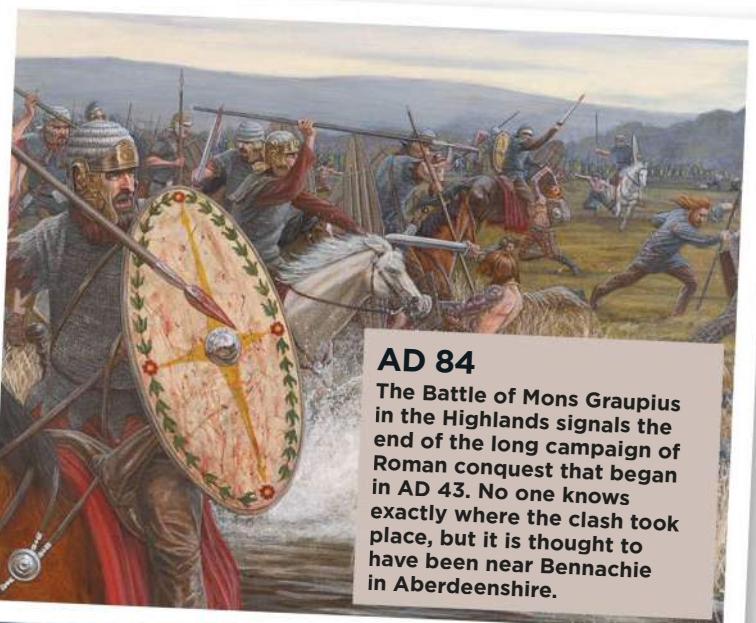
# Britain

was hardly a civilised affair...



**AD 60-61**

The Iceni, led by Queen Boudicca, and the Trinovantes tribes of what is now East Anglia, rise up against Rome. The rebels destroy the cities of Colchester, London and St Albans, and badly maul the Ninth Legion before being defeated in battle. Nearly 500,000 people are thought to have died in the revolt.



**AD 84**

The Battle of Mons Graupius in the Highlands signals the end of the long campaign of Roman conquest that began in AD 43. No one knows exactly where the clash took place, but it is thought to have been near Bennachie in Aberdeenshire.

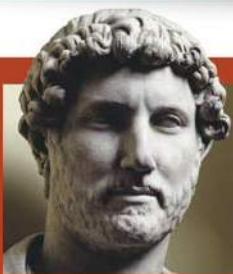


**AD 139**

The Emperor Antoninus Pius advances his soldiers into Scotland. The Emperor commissions the construction of a new frontier wall between Glasgow and Edinburgh – the Antonine Wall. This is itself abandoned by AD 163.



An easterly view along the Antonine Wall towards Bonnybridge, Falkirk



**AD 122**

Emperor Hadrian visits Britain after a series of military defeats, including the probable destruction of the Ninth Legion, and sets about establishing the northern reaches of his Empire with a vast stone wall.

**AD 105**

Problems elsewhere in the Roman Empire necessitate the withdrawal of many troops from the southern lowlands of Scotland.



The first of many Roman boats leave Britain's shores

**AD 409**

Having had enough of rogue Emperors, military instability, tax increases and barbarian incursions, the authorities in Britain finally reject the rule of Rome, electing to establish their own systems of government.



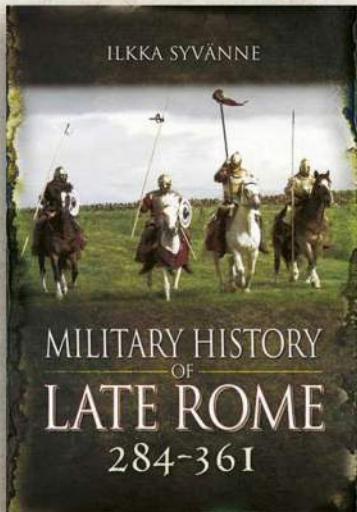
**AD 410**

The beleaguered and largely ineffective Roman Emperor Honorius tells the cities of Britain to look to their own defence in future and not to expect any further aid from Rome. From this moment, Britain is officially out of the Empire.

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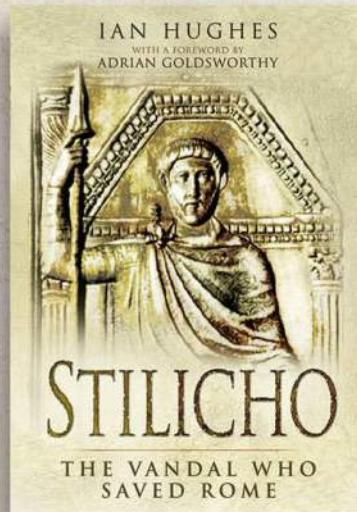


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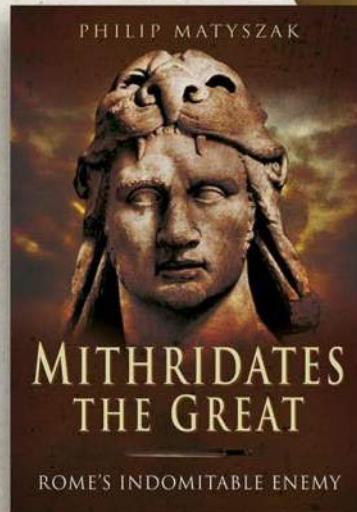
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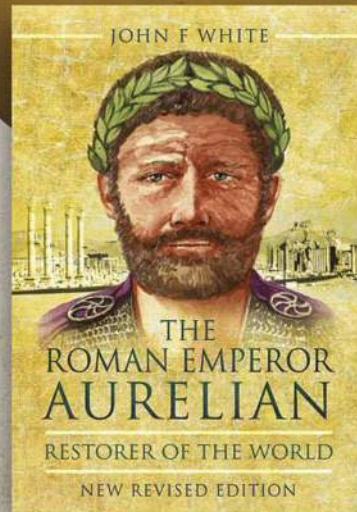
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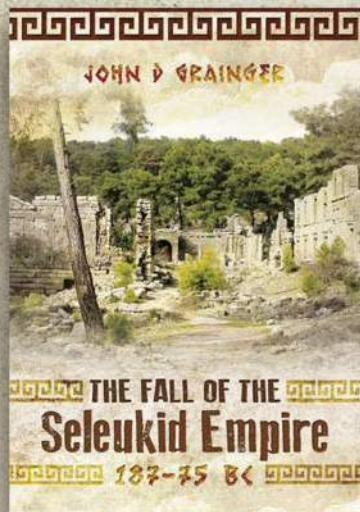
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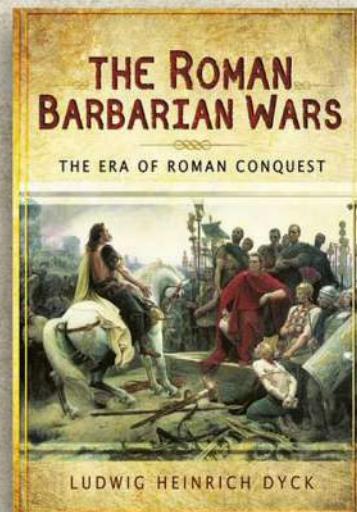
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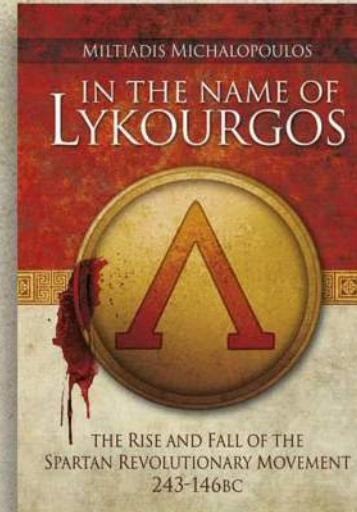
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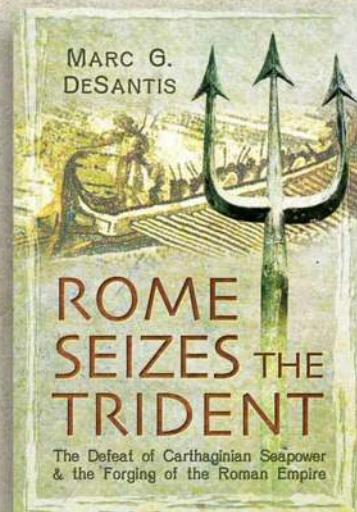
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# HADRIAN'S WALL

## LIFE ON THE EDGE OF THE EMPIRE

In the second century AD, the Emperor of Rome ordered the construction of a wall to secure the northernmost border of his empire. It was to be the greatest single building project ever seen in Europe, as **Miles Russell** reveals...

**OVER THE WALL**  
This historic wall  
stretches 73 miles  
across the country,  
over some of the  
wildest and most  
dramatic scenery  
in England

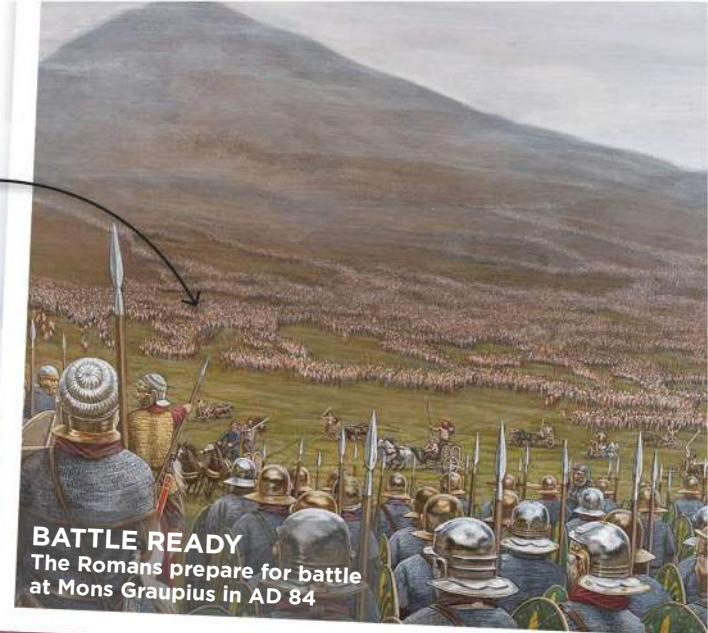




**SCOTS V ITALIANS**  
Barbarian and Roman re-enactors clash at Birdoswald Roman Fort in Northumberland

### FIGHT FIGURES

According to the historian Tacitus, **5,000 professional soldiers** of the Roman Empire met **30,000 men from the Highlands** at Mons Graupius.



### BATTLE READY

The Romans prepare for battle at Mons Graupius in AD 84

large garrison here would reap no significant financial rewards.

Following Agricola's success at Mons Graupius, the Emperor Domitian (ruled AD 81-96) declared that all of Britain had been subjugated. Given what had been achieved, this was no idle boast. The trouble was that Rome, at this time, was facing significant problems elsewhere in the Empire. 'The British Project' was starting to look like a huge waste of money and resources. Gradually, troops were withdrawn from the northern uplands, dismantling forts and demolishing military works as they went. By the beginning of the second century AD, the retreat had stabilised along a line running between Carlisle and Newcastle (the Tyne-Solway isthmus). All claim by Rome to land north of this was formally, if rather quietly, abandoned.

**5,000**

The number of men in the Ninth Legion, most of whom disappeared in the early second century AD

**G**eneral Gnaeus Julius Agricola stood before the blood-soaked heathers of Mons Graupius in the Highlands. He looked down on the mutilated bodies of 10,000 tribal Britons and over 300 Roman soldiers, and surveyed the scene. "An awful silence reigned on every hand," his son-in-law, the historian Tacitus, was later to record. "The hills were deserted, houses

The northern highlands of Scotland had caused Rome some major problems. Here, they found no great native centres to conquer or powerful kings to negotiate with. Instead, the society was decentralised and scattered. Rome's soldiery had no real experience of guerrilla warfare – fighting an enemy that refused to come out in the open – or of operations in mountainous terrain where they could not deploy in well-ordered discipline. For the

## "ROME'S SOLDIERY HAD NO REAL EXPERIENCE OF GUERRILLA WARFARE OR OF MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN"

smoking in the distance, and our scouts did not meet a soul." It was the summer of AD 84, and the general had just countered the final act of native resistance in a war that had begun in AD 43 on the beaches of southern England. Agricola's fleet, facing no further opposition, now circumnavigated Britain, demonstrating that the whole of the island was conquered.

first time since it had arrived in Britain, the Roman army started to suffer significant losses. Worse, things did not look good from an economic perspective. The land in the north was better suited to pasture than intensive crop production and, as far as Rome was concerned, there were no known valuable mineral reserves. It was apparent that maintaining a

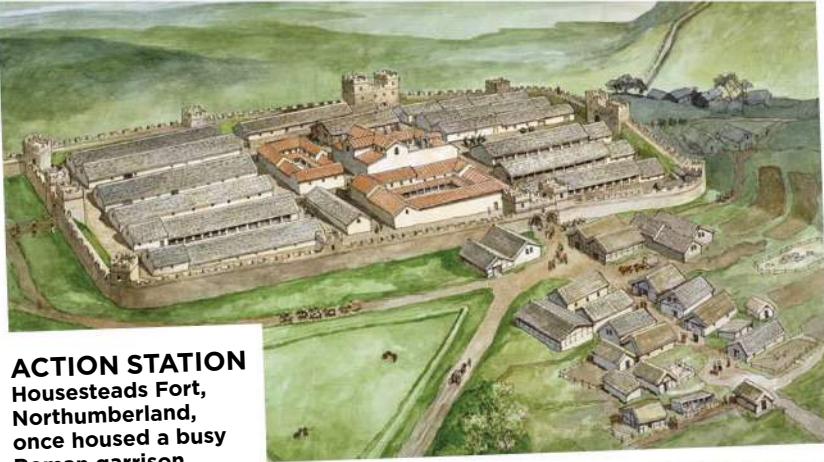
### SAFETY MATTERS

The political scene in Britain at this time remains mysterious, as there is little written evidence of what it was like. One source, the Roman scholar Fronto, did later note that at the start of the 120s AD: "Great numbers of soldiers were killed by the British," in an uprising that may have spread as far south as London. Fronto's "great numbers" of Roman fatalities may have been, specifically, a reference to the missing Ninth Legion. This particular elite fighting unit totally disappeared from army records at about this time, and the vanishing act has never been explained. While local legends endure that the battalion was ambushed by a band of northern tribal warriors, some modern historians believe the unit was removed from Britain and stationed elsewhere in the Empire. This, however, hardly seems credible given the problems in the province.

Whatever the reality of situation, things looked bad and, in the summer of AD 122, the Emperor Hadrian (r117-138 AD) thought it deserved his immediate attention. Arriving in Britain with a new Legion, the Sixth, to replace the absent Ninth, Hadrian immediately set to work. Once peace and order had been restored,

# FORT LIFE

The ruins of Housesteads Fort provide real insight into life on the wild frontier...



**ACTION STATION**  
Housesteads Fort,  
Northumberland,  
once housed a busy  
Roman garrison



## HOSPITAL

Those injured on the frontier would have been rushed here for medical attention – a series of wards and operating theatres around a central courtyard.



## GRANARIES

The garrison's entire grain supply was kept here. Two food-storage buildings with buttresses and raised internal floors (above), increased air flow and reduced dampness.

## THE COMMANDING OFFICER'S HOUSE

The fort's chief officer was a Roman citizen, and had the best rooms on site. His house, which had at least one heated room (above), was large enough for his immediate family and servants.

## GATEWAY

Soldiers heading out into the barbarian lands beyond would have used the fort's north gate (above).

## CIVILIAN SETTLEMENT

Over time, a civilian settlement known as a *vicus* developed outside the fort. This is where the soldiers would go to visit their families and to seek any non-military services.

## HEADQUARTERS

At the centre was the *principia*, or HQ, which housed all the bureaucracy, documentation, regimental banners and pay for the garrison.

## LATRINE

Good toilet facilities (right) were essential. Here, waste dropped from stone toilet seats into a drain which, when the water tanks were opened, flushed the unwanted material away.



## BARRACKS

Much of the fort was filled with soldier digs. Here are two barrack blocks, each housing 80 men (a century) together with their officer (a centurion). The men stationed here were Belgian.

# "EVERYTHING TO THE SOUTH WAS 'ROMAN' AND EVERYTHING TO THE NORTH 'BARBARIAN'"

## FIRE AND WAR

Roman re-enactors do battle with the natives of the north

he determined to set the northernmost limits of the province in monumental terms.

Even today, in its semi-ruinous state, Hadrian's Wall is an impressive and awe-inspiring monument. The wall, which took perhaps seven years to complete, ran for a distance of 73 miles from sea-to-sea, between what is now Bowness-on-Solway in Cumbria to Newcastle in the east. Originally designed to be 3m thick and up to 7m tall, the structure comprised 800,000 cubic metres of hand-carved stone, dug from local quarries. Construction tied up troops from all three of the permanent Legions at York, Chester and Caerleon (in what is now south-east Wales). Together with the associated milecastles, turrets, outposts, ditches, roads and later forts, Hadrian's Wall represents the greatest single building project ever undertaken in Europe.

## BARBARIANS AT THE GATE

Designed by Emperor Hadrian himself, the wall is more than a simple barrier. With its gates, earthworks, outlying early-warning signal towers and system of fortlets that continues west along the Cumbrian coast, it is a complex system of control. It was an architectural mechanism of shock and awe designed to maintain order along Rome's most troublesome of borders.

It may also have had a further function: to establish a permanent militarised zone and keep the northern tribes of Britain apart, separating those 'inside' from non-Roman influence beyond. This would ensure that any of the disaffected elements within the Empire were kept from potentially destabilising external forces, such as barbarian tribes. From now on, at least from the perspective of imperial spin, everything to the south was 'Roman' and everything to the north 'Barbarian'.

As planned, Hadrian's Wall possessed a gate every Roman mile (0.92 miles). Access through these gates was tightly controlled by a small garrison of soldiers housed in what modern archaeologists have called a 'milecastle'. Between each milecastle were two turrets – towers built into the body of the wall – together providing continuous lines of communication and sight along the frontier. Larger bodies of troops

**HEAD OF STATE**  
**Hadrian, the Emperor who ordered and designed the northern border barrier**

were kept behind the wall, on the Stanegate military road, as a strategic reserve, able to swiftly deploy to areas of potential trouble. Before completion, however, substantial numbers of soldiers were brought up onto the wall itself in newly built forts (the construction of which often necessitated the demolition of existing walls as well as turrets and milecastles). At the same time, certain gateways through the wall were blocked while, to the south, an extensive ditch, flanked on either side by an earth rampart, known as the *vallum*, was dug, ostensibly to better define the southernmost limits of the militarised zone.

The forts were occupied by auxiliary troops, with non-citizen soldiers recruited from newly conquered territories around the Empire. These were second-tier troops – less well equipped and trained than the elite Roman Legions – deployed for policing duties on the frontline. Inscriptions and religious altars recovered from the wall provide us with an idea of the diverse ethnic mix of these auxiliary units, which included Dacians (from modern-day Romania), Gauls (from France), Thracians (from Bulgaria), Tungrians (from Belgium), Syrians,



## ARMY JOBS

ABOVE: The vast task of Hadrian's Wall begins  
RIGHT: A tile bearing the name of the missing Ninth Legion, found in York

Spaniards and even a detachment of specialist boatmen from the banks of the Tigris River (in modern-day Iraq).

Many of the long-term forts established along the line of Hadrian's Wall eventually developed civilian settlements, known as *vici*. The *vicus* is where members of the garrison would go to relax and seek entertainment, as well as where the unofficial wives and families of soldiers would live. Certain sites, such as Vindolanda, at Chesterholm to the south of Hadrian's Wall, possessed substantial *vicus* developments, which sometimes grew to be larger than the parent fort.

It is possible, given the needs of a garrison and the desire to avoid travelling great distances for supplies, that civilians from all over the Empire were actively encouraged by the authorities to settle close to an army base. By the late second century AD, many such sites were spawning successful, semi-autonomous communities, each supporting a diverse mix of cultures and ethnicities.

## BUCKING THE TREND

When Emperor Claudius (r41–54 AD) first initiated his invasion of Britain, Rome had a clear strategy. The plan was to militarily pacify the territory, establish firm control, delegate authority to local power structures and then remove troops to fight elsewhere. This policy may have worked successfully in other areas of the Empire but, in Britain, it did not.

This was, in no small part, due to the fact that Rome repeatedly failed to deploy sufficient resources, both to exercise permanent control of northern Britain, and to win the hearts and minds of the indigenous population. Ultimately, the cultural 'bubbles' of forts and their



# LETTERS FROM HADRIAN'S WALL

A handful of exceptionally rare surviving letters reveal a great deal about life at the Wall...

We possess little written evidence for everyday life in the average fort or civilian settlement. Thankfully, a wealth of relevant information has been uncovered at one British site, the frontier fort of Vindolanda in Northumberland. Here, large numbers of army documents, relating to garrison

life between the years 90–105 AD, have been recovered, preserved in waterlogged conditions. These are known as the 'Vindolanda tablets'.

Much of the information is, as one may imagine, fairly monotonous, detailing lists of supplies and resources, but some provide tantalisingly rare insight into what life was like within the tight-knit community of an average frontier fort.

One of the most interesting letters was written by one fort commander's wife, Claudia Severa, to another, Sulpicia Lepidina, and it provides a glimpse into the social lives of those at the very limits of the Empire.

*"Claudia Severa to her Lepidina greetings. On 11 September, sister, for the day of the celebration of my birthday, I give you a warm invitation to make sure that you come to us, to make the day more enjoyable for me by your arrival, if you are present. Give my greetings to your Cerialis. My Aelius and my little son send him their greetings. Farewell, sister, my dearest soul."*

Another, from Lepidina's husband Flavius Cerialis to Aelius Brocchus, Severa's husband, relates to the masculine pursuits of army officers: "If you love me, brother, I ask that you send me some hunting-nets." While an anonymous writer records more mundane concerns such as the sending of "pairs of socks from Sattua, two pairs of sandals and two pairs of underpants".

Other snippets from the Vindolanda tablets include quotations from the *Aeneid* and the *Georgics*, works of the first-century-BC poet Virgil. One contains a corrected mistake, which means the texts may preserve elementary instruction in Latin, possibly for the children of the fort commander.

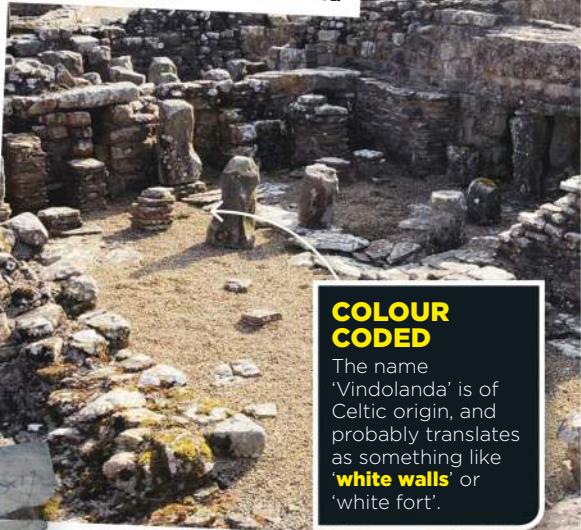
The only time the native population impinges on the Roman world of the tablet writers is in a piece recording their apparent lack of fighting skills:

*"The Britons are unprotected by armour... their cavalry do not use swords nor do the wretched Britons mount in order to throw javelins".*

Intriguingly, the word used for the "wretched Britons" is "Brittunculi" – a contemptuous, and no doubt racist, term of abuse.

## WRITTEN TREASURE

Vindolanda Fort in Northumberland, where the horde of documents was found



## COLOUR CODED

The name 'Vindolanda' is of Celtic origin, and probably translates as something like 'white walls' or 'white fort'.

## VINDOLANDA FINDS

1. A third-century-AD ring inscribed with 'mum' and 'dad'
2. Scenes of gladiatorial combat adorn this fragment of Roman glass
3. Claudia Severa's preserved party invitation, which shows that a Roman's social life was a top priority





THEY'RE NOT LOCAL...

## THE BRITISH OPINION

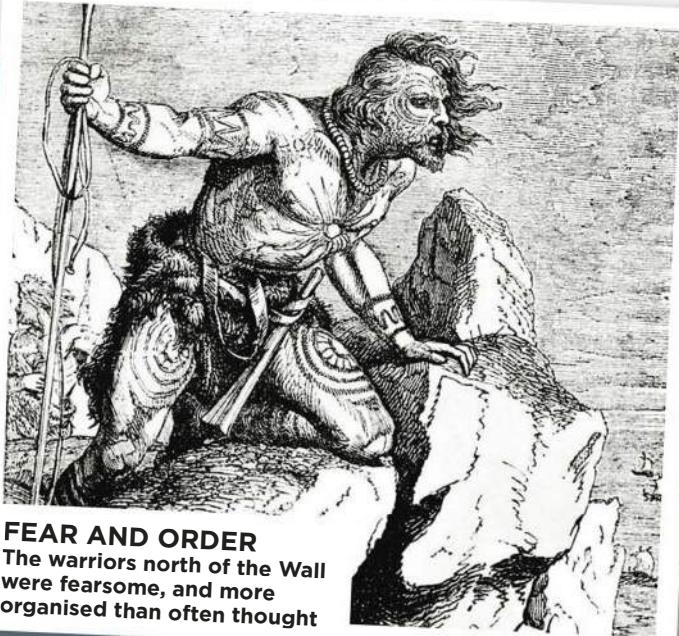
*What did the indigenous Britons make of the Wall, and the soldiers that guarded it?*

The long-term presence of the Roman army disrupted and stunted civilian social growth in the north of Britain. While in the south, Rome established towns and delegated authority to indigenous groups in order to help advance the Roman cause, in the north, it was another matter. Here, the army maintained control, and there was no such desire to give power to natives, in case they used it to undermine the military.

The longer the army remained in power, the more its presence suppressed the very people of native society who would normally be persuaded to become more 'Roman'. Ultimately, Rome won the war but, in northern England and southern Scotland at least, it could never win over the hearts and minds of the Britons.

Instead, many of its forts operated as secluded pockets of Roman culture, adrift within a wider native sea.

North of the Wall, the presence of the Roman military seems only to have forced the native peoples to organise themselves against their oppressors. Ever larger tribal confederacies grew, challenging the authority of the Emperor. By the third century AD, many individual tribes seem to have merged into a two greater groups, known to the Romans as the Caledonians and the Maetae.



**FEAR AND ORDER**  
The warriors north of the Wall were fearsome, and more organised than often thought

in AD 367, the tribal invasion efforts culminated in the so-called 'Great Barbarian Conspiracy'. The Caledonian tribes north of the wall joined forces with tribes of Ireland (the Scots and Attacotti) and those from across the North Sea (the Angles, Saxons, Jutes and Frisians). Despite being refurbished, it was clear that Rome's interests were drifting away from its most northern province and, by AD 410, Britain was cut free and left to defend itself. By then, many of the Wall's soldiers had become so enmeshed with the civil population, they were little more than a citizen militia, protecting their own interests, fields and livestock. Families moved into the forts, which became strong points in the immediate post-Roman period, while the undefended *vici* were abandoned.

Laying empty for the first time in some 300 years, Hadrian's great frontier development entered a lengthy period of decline and decay. The degradation would continue until, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the first serious archaeological excavations began. ◎

dependant *vicus* had comparatively little impact on the wider lands beyond. The Roman troops frequently had fine delicacies such as oysters and Mediterranean wine, imported from places as far away as Egypt and Syria. In the native areas far beyond the militarised zone, elements of the indigenous population continued to rear cattle and farm the land. Some, it is true, did move closer to the forts, in order to exploit and profit from new markets; most, it would seem, did not.

### LAST FRONTIER

Imposing as it evidently was, the border established by Hadrian could not last forever. By the late fourth century AD, the nature of security threats to the Empire had changed,

as too had Rome's ability to respond. Three centuries before, the resources that Rome had been able to commit to a project such as the invasion of Britain had appeared limitless. By the mid third century AD, the mighty Roman Empire had been brought to its knees by internal conflict, repeated barbarian invasions and the combined effects of economic stagnation, inflation, civil unrest, mass unemployment and disease.

In AD 180, a confederacy of northern tribes crossed the wall, inflicting considerable damage to the civil and military infrastructure. Further incursions occurred in the later third and fourth centuries AD, until



**BORDER PATROL**  
Re-enactors of Legio I Italica, an 80-strong Roman Army, march along the Wall near Birdoswald Fort



# GET HOOKED

There's so much more to discover about Roman Britain...

## LOCATIONS

### ► CORNIUM MUSEUM, CIRENCESTER

One of the most extensive collections of Roman mosaics, tombstones, sculptures and everyday artefacts is found in this new museum. Acquired from sites in and around the second largest town of Roman Britain, this material provides a dramatic picture of life in the province. [coriniummuseum.org](http://coriniummuseum.org)



### ALSO VISIT

- Brading Villa, Isle of Wight [www.bradingromanvilla.org.uk](http://www.bradingromanvilla.org.uk)
- Housesteads Fort, Northumberland Search at [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

## BOOKS



### BRITANNIA (LATEST EDITION, 1991)

by Sheppard Frere

First published in 1967, and reprinted thereafter, this book on the archaeology and history of Roman Britain has never really been bettered.



### UNROMAN BRITAIN (2011)

by Miles Russell and Stewart Laycock

A counterpoint to the standard view of Roman Britain, this book looks beneath the surface to see just how enthusiastic the Britons really were towards Rome.

### ALSO READ

- The Real Lives of Roman Britain (2015) by Guy de la Bedoyere
- Fishbourne Roman Palace (1998) by Barry Cunliffe
- Hadrian's Wall (2000) by Brian Dobson and David Breeze

## ON SCREEN

### THE EAGLE (2011)

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**CRYING OVER SPILLED BEER**  
A common sight during Prohibition was the police or federal agents taking axes to beer barrels and crates of whiskey bottles or, as seen here, pouring gallon after gallon down the drain.

### AT A GLANCE

From 1920 to 1933, it was illegal to manufacture and sell alcohol in the United States. The supporters of Prohibition had hoped it would reduce crime and improve the country's moral character, but it failed. The ban was difficult to enforce as Americans continued to drink bootlegged booze in secret speakeasies, while organised crime ruthlessly grasped control of the illegal alcohol production. Prohibition is remembered for violent gangsters, like Al Capone, but it was also a time when ordinary men and women broke the law to quench their thirst.



# THE NOBLE EXPERIMENT

It was meant to cure the country of its social and moral ills, but Prohibition had the opposite effect and it failed to stop Americans from enjoying a drink...

# BANNING BEER

In January 1920, the US prohibited the manufacture, sale and distribution of "intoxicating liquors" – to mixed reactions



## THE WRONG KIND OF TANKED

After the 18th Amendment and Volstead Act comes into effect – banning drinks with an alcohol content over 0.5 per cent – fervent Prohibition agents make public shows of their enforcement of the law, even employing tanks to destroy beer barrels and homemade distilleries.



## LEFT HIGH AND DRY

Prohibition is the result of many years of zealous campaigning by the temperance movement – nicknamed the 'Drys' – who consider alcohol to be a curse on the country and believe banning it will reduce crime and immorality.

## HOPING FOR HOOCH

Not everyone backs the ban. In fact, millions ignore the law, risking arrest by drinking easily available illegal booze. By the 1930s, people have had enough and 'We want beer!' marches spring up calling for Prohibition's repeal.



## STAYING SOBER

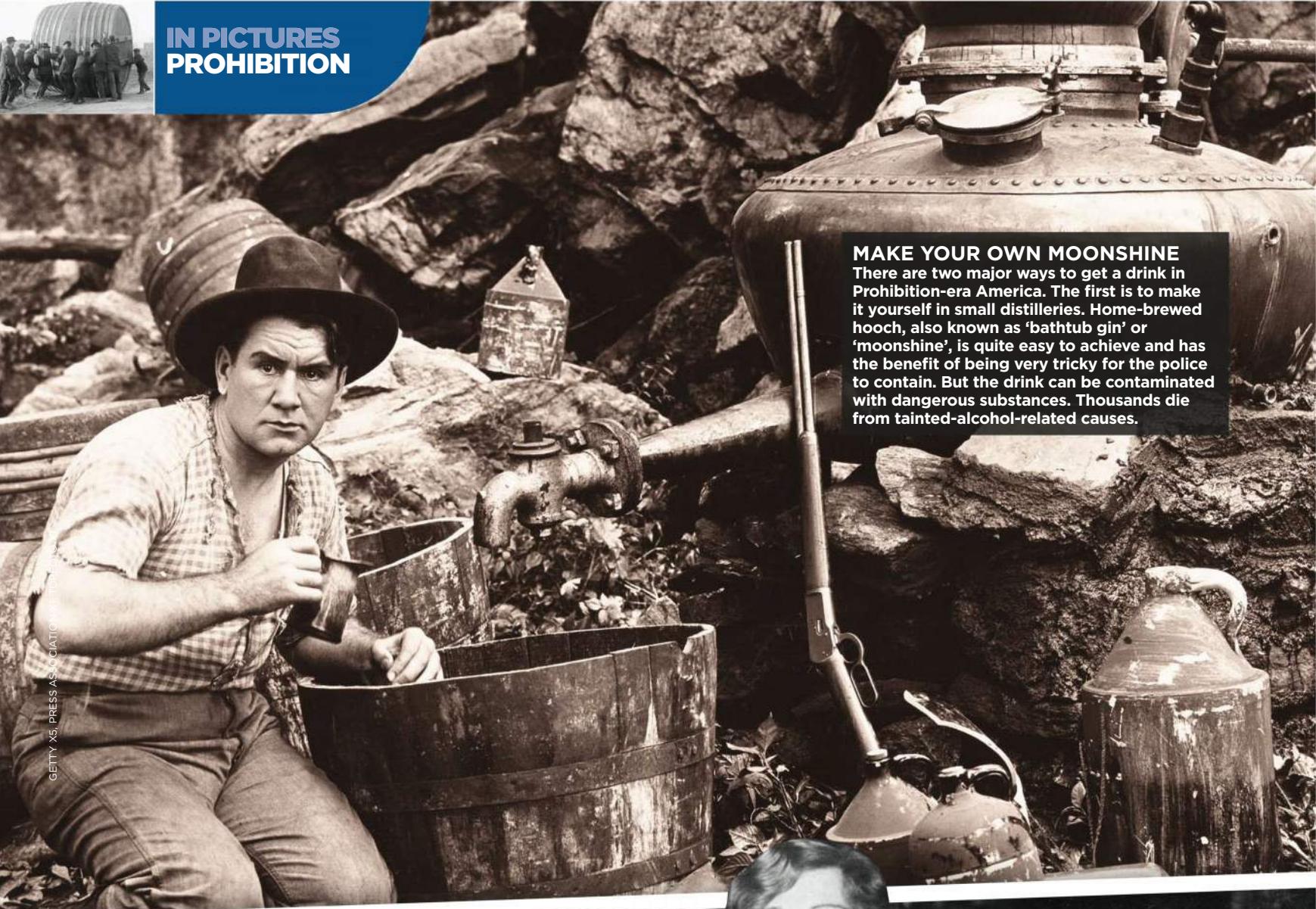
It doesn't take long for Prohibition to be seen as failing. It is poorly enforced, extensively violated and is giving rise to organised crime, yet there are still those who support the law, especially members of the Anti-Saloon League and, seen here, the Women's Christian Temperance Union.

## DOWN THE DRAIN

Initially, there are only 1,520 agents to administer Prohibition, which is visibly inadequate in dealing with alcohol being smuggled in from Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean. To make matters worse, police and federal agents are not beyond taking bribes.



**MILLIONS OF GALLONS OF LIQUOR WERE POURED AWAY**



#### MAKE YOUR OWN MOONSHINE

There are two major ways to get a drink in Prohibition-era America. The first is to make it yourself in small distilleries. Home-brewed hooch, also known as 'bathtub gin' or 'moonshine', is quite easy to achieve and has the benefit of being very tricky for the police to contain. But the drink can be contaminated with dangerous substances. Thousands die from tainted-alcohol-related causes.

#### TAKING IT SPEAKEASY

The second way to quench a thirst is to head to a speakeasy, an illegal bar. There is always the chance of it being raided by police, but that doesn't stop them thriving, with their jazz music and party atmospheres. In New York alone - where Texas Guinan, 'Queen of the Nightclubs', owns her uproarious establishment, the 300 Club - there are thought to be 30,000 speakeasies.



THE ROARING TWENTIES  
WERE IN GOOD VOICE  
BEHIND THE CLOSED DOORS  
OF THE SPEAKEASIES

# BOOTLEGGING

As public demand remained high, there was a lot of money to be made for those willing to provide the supply



## BEER BELLY

In the early days, bootleggers rely on foreign alcohol, brought into the United States by smugglers like this Mexican pair, who hide bottles under their coats. As organised crime takes over, however, liquor enters the country by the truckload.



## OFF TO THE CLINK

While many police and Prohibition agents are bought off, there is still a risk of raids by incorruptible officers - as these bootleggers in 1921 find out when their car is wrecked in a police chase. Gangster Al Capone is finally brought down by such an officer, Eliot Ness.



## EVERY TRICK IN THE BOOK

It's not just the bootleggers, ordinary people come up with extremely resourceful ways of hiding their drink, including disguising flasks as books, as demonstrated above. Interestingly, it is never actually illegal to drink alcohol during Prohibition - it is the manufacture, sale and distribution that is outlawed.

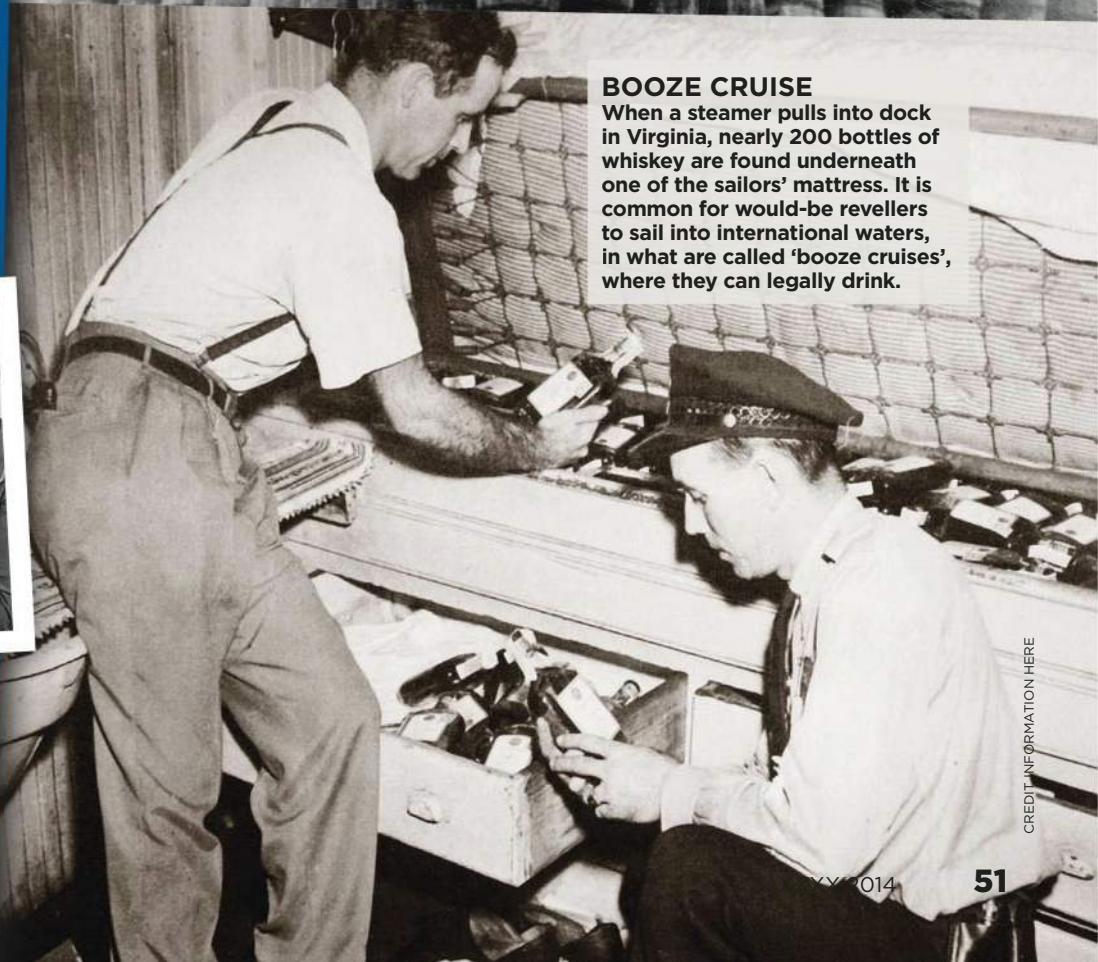
## BARREL BUSTERS

No matter how many barrels of beer are seized and destroyed, enforcing Prohibition has limited success. Bootlegging becomes such an expansive and complex operation that it gives birth to organised crime, where gangsters such as Al Capone control the flow of liquor. It is a highly lucrative, if violent, business - Capone supposedly makes \$60 million a year as he intimidates, bribes and kills his way to be America's most famous crime kingpin.



## BOOZE CRUISE

When a steamer pulls into dock in Virginia, nearly 200 bottles of whiskey are found underneath one of the sailors' mattresses. It is common for would-be revellers to sail into international waters, in what are called 'booze cruises', where they can legally drink.





## IN PICTURES PROHIBITION



### ON THE HOUSE

When Franklin Delano Roosevelt is elected President in 1932, he pledges to repeal the 18th Amendment, doing so with the wry comment: "I think this would be a good time for a beer." After 13 years, men and women celebrate the end of Prohibition at Chicago's Sloppy Joe's Bar with a round of drinks on the house.

## HERE COMES THE HANGOVER

The 21st Amendment ended Prohibition after 13 years

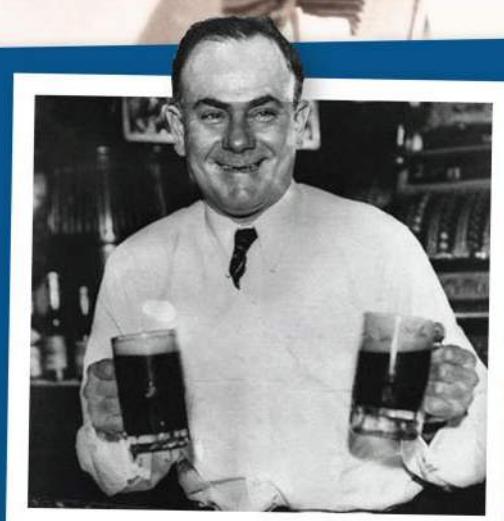


### OFF THE WAGON

Cheers ring out as the first truck with fresh beer leaves New York's Jacob Ruppert's Brewery in 1933. After the Wall Street Crash of 1929, which had led to the Great Depression, people have far less money to spend on alcohol – but much more need for a pick-me-up.

### I'LL DRINK TO THAT

Newsreels report a "real pre-war spirit" among revellers – and there is good reason for the US government to join in the celebrations. The 13-year ban costs \$300 million in enforcement and sees some \$11 billion lost in tax revenue.



**RAISE A GLASS** The 'noble experiment', as Prohibition came to be known, is a dismal failure. Not only do Americans go to extreme lengths to circumvent the ban, but it spawns organised crime and comes to an ignoble end with the first-ever repeal of a constitutional amendment.

YOUR ANCESTORS WERE

# PRETTY AMAZING

A black and white photograph of a man with red hair sitting in a chair, getting a haircut. He is wearing a patterned cape and holding an open book titled 'GREEN MANTEL' by 'JOHN BUCHAN'. A man in a flight suit is standing behind him, cutting his hair. In the background, a propeller aircraft is visible.

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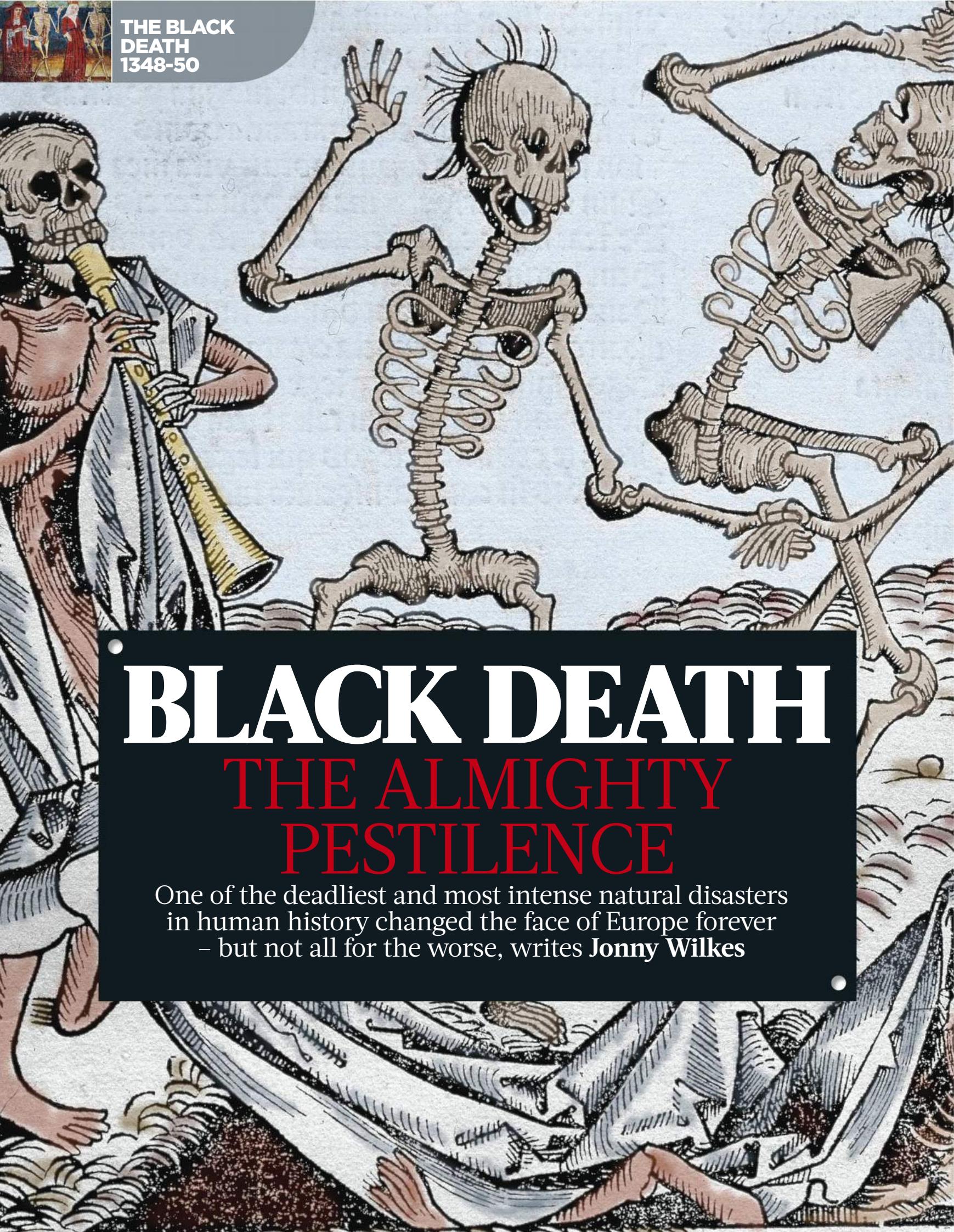


THE BLACK  
DEATH  
1348-50

# BLACK DEATH

## THE ALMIGHTY PESTILENCE

One of the deadliest and most intense natural disasters in human history changed the face of Europe forever – but not all for the worse, writes **Jonny Wilkes**





By embracing death, as in this 1493 image created by Michael Wolgemut, people were able to face up to the plague



This 14th-century chapel window from Canterbury Cathedral shows people's fear of the plague

**E**arly in October 1347, a dozen trading galleys pulled into the Sicilian port of Messina at the end of a long voyage, which had begun far to the east in the Black Sea. After the ships had docked, it was immediately clear to the awaiting merchants at the island's harbour that something was very wrong. Aboard, they discovered that many of the sailors had perished on the journey, while the few remaining survivors were themselves at death's door – they were coughing up blood, racked with pain and with oozing boils on their bodies. The Black Death had arrived in Europe.

This account of the first infection comes from the chronicle of Franciscan friar Michael of Piazza, who described the living crew of the ships as having "sickness clinging to their very bones". Over the next few years, that sickness would spread at a terrifying rate across Europe, ravaging cities and countryside, rich and poor, young and old; tearing apart the fabric of every society; and killing (at a very conservative estimate) some 25 million people. With most believing it to be the wrath of God punishing them for their sins, it seemed the very existence of human civilisation was about to splutter and die.

### DISEASE BREEDING GROUND

Conditions in 14th-century Europe were ripe for a pandemic like the Black Death to take hold. The plague may have originated in Asia – there were accounts of outbreaks in China, India and Persia before 1347 – but it was able to move quickly along trading routes, notably via the Silk Road and by sea. "The development of

long-distance trade by galleys and cogs from the late 1200s was crucial to the plague's spread," affirms Black Death historian Ole Jorgen Benedictow. With distant lands more closely connected, by the time traders knew they were carrying a disease, it was already too late.

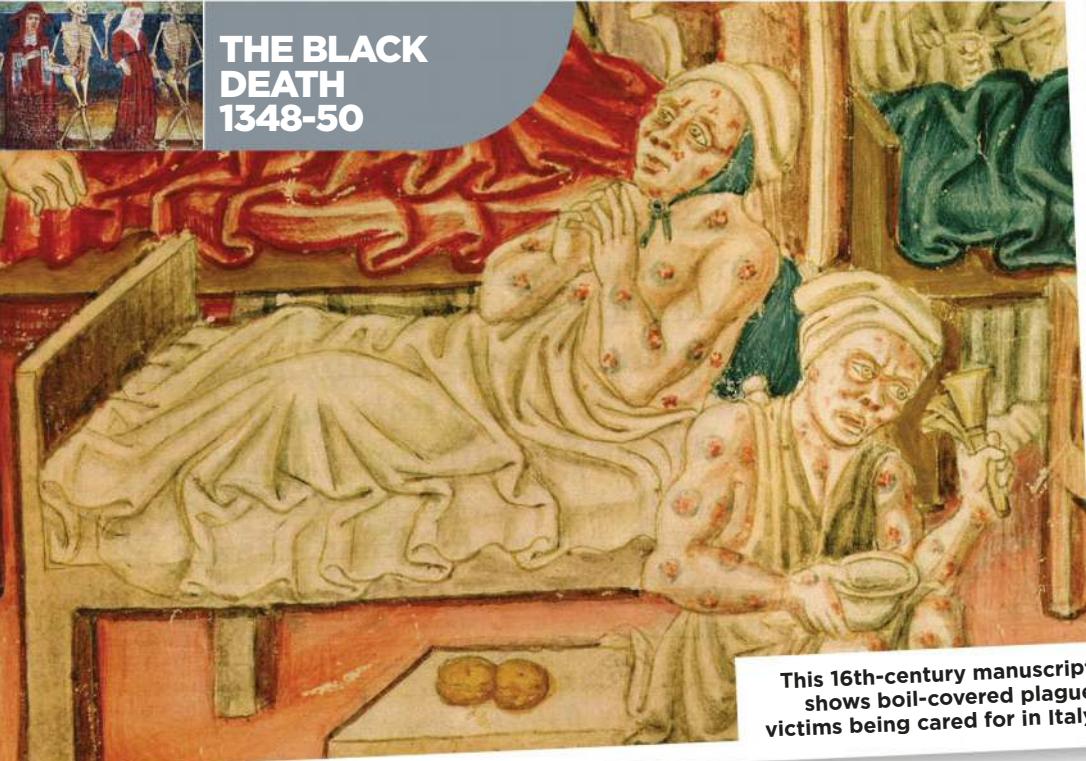
Once it had arrived in Europe, people were powerless against the devastations of the pestilence. Medical understanding was severely lacking, wars and poor harvests had left populations debilitated, and towns were unhygienic environments where rats and germs thrived, with rubbish and sewage left in streets

with no drainage systems. Medieval Europe was the ideal breeding ground for diseases. As Philip Ziegler explained in his 1969 book *The Black Death*, the plague "found awaiting it in Europe a population singularly ill-equipped to resist. Distracted by wars, weakened by malnutrition, exhausted by his struggle to win a living from his inadequate portion of ever less fertile land,

the medieval peasant was ready to succumb even before the blow had fallen".

Within days of the ships arriving at Messina, the town was under the shadow of the Black Death – named the 'Great Pestilence' or 'Great Mortality' by contemporary writers – before spreading to mainland Europe, through Italy, France and into England by 1348. As panicked and terrified survivors attempted to flee almost-certain death, they had no idea that they were actually carrying the infection with them. At first, it was impossible to know who had contracted it, but painful, bleeding buboes would soon appear on the neck, armpits and groin. Giovanni Boccaccio, an Italian writer at

## THE BLACK DEATH 1348-50



This 16th-century manuscript shows boil-covered plague victims being cared for in Italy

At the time of the Black Death, described them as "certain tumours... some of which grew as large as a common apple, others as an egg," which multiplied around the body. The victim was then struck by a terrible fever, so bad they would be unable to stand, accompanied by bouts of vomiting and coughing up blood. Less than a week after the initial signs of illness, the vast majority of plague sufferers had died in agony.

What's more, people died knowing they had probably passed on the plague to their loved ones, and there was nothing that could be done for them. Boccaccio explained that the "virulence of the pest" was like a fire devouring everything brought near it. "Nay," he went on, "the evil went yet further, for not merely by speech or association with the sick was the malady communicated to the healthy with consequent peril of death, but any that touched the clothes of the sick or aught else that had been touched or used by them, seemed thereby to contract the disease."

ART ARCHIVE XI, ALAMY XI, GETTY X2, TOPPHOTO X1

As the Black Death spread, accounts tell similar stories of mass graves and people abandoning each other to their gruesome fate. Agnolo di Tura, an Italian chronicler from Siena, wrote how he buried all five of his children "with my own hands", but it was more common for the dead to be thrown into ditches. It was the same in Florence in 1348. The chronicles of Marchionne di Coppo Stefani describe how "Those who were poor who died during the night were bundled up quickly and thrown into the pit. They then took some earth and shovelled it down on top of them, and later others were placed on top of them and then another layer

of earth, just as one makes lasagne with layers of pasta and cheese." There was no way of knowing how badly a town would be hit, with some miraculously escaping relatively lightly, while others were utterly annihilated. It is thought that during the first outbreak, around 1,000 villages disappeared due to a total loss of population. The year 1349 was particularly devastating in England, with essentially nowhere untouched, as encapsulated by this scrawled piece of graffiti found at St Mary's in Hertfordshire: "Wretched, terrible, destructive year, the remnants of the people alone remain."

### GOD'S PUNISHMENT

One thing became clear straight away – no one knew how to treat the pestilence. There was a general belief that the plague could be spread in bad-smelling air, so a main 'cure' used by doctors who dared see patients (many didn't) was burning herbs and encouraging people to carry sweet-smelling flowers. Blood-letting and lancing boils were also common, as well as a selection of unorthodox remedies, but every treatment was either dangerous or ineffective.

In their dire need, people didn't look to doctors for their salvation, but to the heavens. It was believed that the suffering was divine retribution – God, it was claimed, was punishing people for their sins.

Rather than rely on the Church for answers, many took the faith into their own hands. The Church, after all, was struggling to look after itself with 25 per cent of the papal court being wiped out, two Archbishops of Canterbury perishing and, according to Ziegler, half of the 17,500-strong

7

The number of Dominican friars – out of 140 – that survived in the southern French town of Montpellier



The funeral of plague victims is recalled in the chronicles of the Abbot of St Giles at Tournai in Belgium

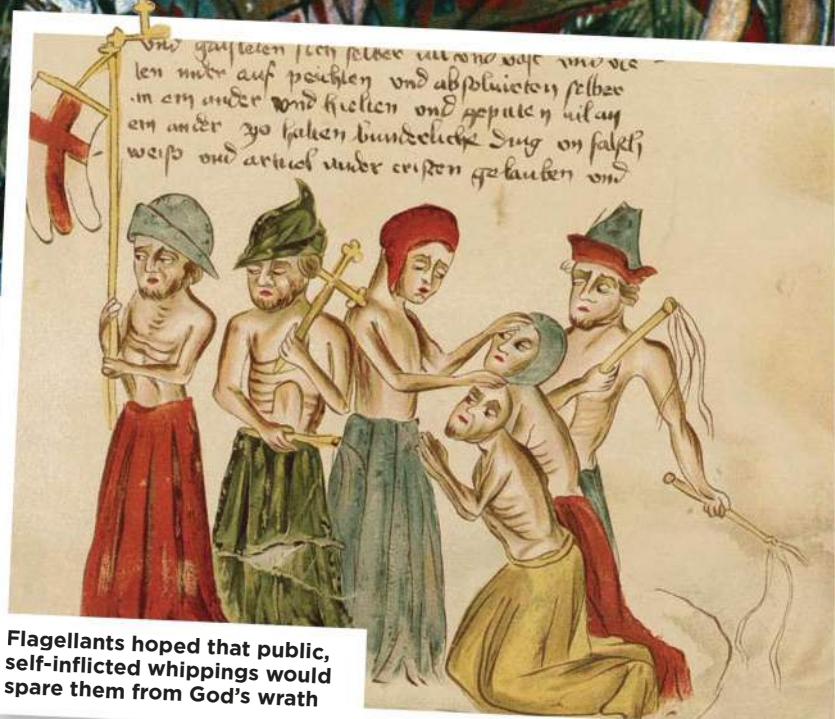
### WRITING'S ON THE WALL

The whole of this detail of medieval graffiti in St Mary's Church, Ashwell, Kent reads: "There was a plague 1000, three times 100, five times 10, a pitiable, fierce violent (plague departed); a wretched populace survives to witness and in the end a mighty wind. Maurus, thunders in this year in the world, 1361."





Some people believed the plague had been started by Jews, who are seen being burned here in retaliation



population of England's religious houses dying in two years. As Ziegler states, "Medieval man felt that his Church had let him down. The plague, it was taken for granted, was the work of God, and the Church assured him, with uncomfortable regularity, that he had brought it on his own head." In order to seek forgiveness, therefore, some turned to the 'flagellants', groups of men who would march from town to town and, in front of an enthusiastic crowd, beat and whip themselves as an act of penance. "They moved in a long crocodile two-by-two, usually in groups of two or three hundred but occasionally even more than a thousand strong," states Ziegler. "Except for occasional hymns, the marchers were silent, their heads and faces hidden in cowls, their eyes fixed on the ground. They were dressed in sombre clothes with red crosses on back, front and cap." Although the bands of flagellants were seen less in England, they were regular sights in mainland Europe, and their displays could become extremely violent.

As they would tie metal studs or nails into the whips so their backs were lacerated, there are accounts of blood spraying across town squares in what Ziegler describes as an "orgy of self-scourging". Their sadistic rituals were opposed by the Church, who saw them both as a threat to their own control and that they were teaching people a false lesson of penitence, so the movement was not

permitted to survive long. The image of parading, cloaked flagellants with horrendous scars all over their bodies, however, remains one of the iconic images of the Black Death.

Another tragic consequence of this environment of intense religious fervour was violent persecutions. Rumours began to circulate that the plague had actually been started by the Jews, who poisoned wells. Therefore, throughout 1348-49, dozens of attacks were carried out on Jewish communities, with each massacre adding to the already inexplicable death toll. Mainz and Cologne, both with large Jewish populations, were decimated, while some 2,000 Jews were murdered by mob violence in Strasbourg.

Yet, despite the relentless pain and suffering, there were some benefits to come out of the Black Death. "This was a good time to be alive," is the bold claim made by Professor Robert Tombs of Cambridge University in a talk at the Chalke Valley History Festival earlier this year. "This was when the English pub was invented and people started drinking lots of beer and playing football

**"In their dire need, people didn't look to doctors for their salvation, but to the heavens."**

and so on. That was in a way due to, or at least a consequence of, and wouldn't have been possible without, the Black Death." While some beat themselves and others looked for enemies to attack, groups of people concluded that the best way to avoid the plague was to indulge in every luxury - drinking endlessly, eating too much and living a much more sexually liberated existence.

Ziegler asserts that such accounts are most certainly exaggerated but admits that "Contemporary chronicles abound in accusations that the years which followed the Black Death were stamped with decadence and rich in every kind of vice. The crime rate soared; blasphemy and sacrilege were commonplace; the rules of sexual morality were flouted; the pursuit of money became the be-all and end-all of people's lives".

There is no denying that after the first outbreak, which was starting to fade away by



THE BLACK  
DEATH  
1348-50

# HOW TO CURE BLACK DEATH



Those trying to survive the Black Death were in the most desperate of times, which called for some desperate measures...



Medieval medicine favoured blood letting as a cure-all for any ailment, including the Black Death



## NICE SMELLS

To protect themselves from foul air, people were instructed to carry around flowers or packets of herbs so that they could have something pleasant to smell.

## BLOOD-LETTING

Drawing blood was used to treat pretty much everything in medieval times, using either leeches or the painful method of cutting the skin and draining the blood into a bowl.

## CRUSHED EMERALDS

This was one for the rich – emeralds were ground down into a fine powder and mixed into food or drink. Trying to swallow it, however, would have been like trying to bite into glass.

## URINE AND FAECES

Once the plague was contracted, a simple way of treating the buboes was to bathe in urine, or rub a mixture of tree resin, flower roots and faeces directly onto the oozing sores.

## LIVE CHICKEN

English doctor Thomas Vicary suggested that a live chicken – after having its bottom shaved – be tied to a sick person's body so that it was touching their buboes. The idea was that the infection would pass from person to poultry.

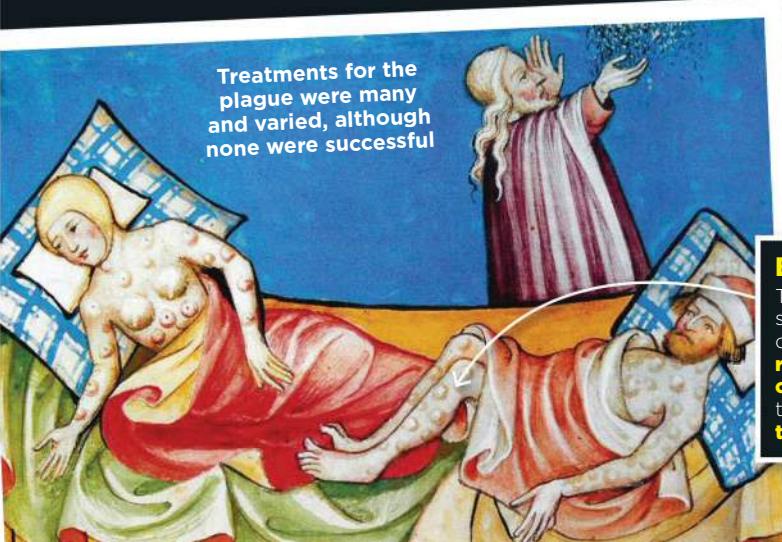
## OLD TREACLE

The sticky substance would be applied to a victim's sores, but it had to be at least ten years old for it to work, apparently.

## LIVING IN SEWERS

As people were scared that the infection was passed in the air, some decided to live in the sewers in the hope of avoiding the disease.

Treatments for the plague were many and varied, although none were successful



## BOILING OVER

This image is believed to show plague victims despite them being **riddled with boils all over** – the Black Death typically confined them to the **groin and armpits**.



## TRY ANYTHING

Drinking arsenic or mercury, sitting next to constantly burning fires, abstaining from meat, bathing and sex – people were prepared to go to whatever lengths they thought would save them.



ABOVE: A plague pit, excavated in East Smithfield, London  
TOP RIGHT: This 14th-century manuscript captures the horror and panic of plague victims  
BELOW RIGHT: Lead crosses were buried with the dead



1350, the living standards for the poor improved. As so many labourers had died, there weren't enough people to work the land, meaning that, while landowners struggled to recover, the poor survivors in western Europe could demand higher wages. "People got better off. There was more land to go around. Resources were not so stretched. What was later called the feudal system largely disappeared," asserts Tombs.

The serfs lived longer, were better fed and even had expendable income for the first time in their lives. "The plague must have been an incredibly terrifying moment in human history," says Mark Ormrod, Professor in History at York University and author of 1996 book *The Black Death in England*. "But medieval society was much more inured to natural and human disasters than is the case in the west today, and there is every sign that people re-established their lives remarkably quickly."

## BRING OUT YOUR DEAD

That said, it is thought that at least 25 million people, one-third of the population of Europe, was wiped out in a most gruesome manner – if not many more – and that couldn't help but live long in Europe's consciousness. It would define society for generations. Benedictow puts the death toll even higher, nearer 50 million. "This is a truly mind-boggling statistic," he says. "It overshadows the horrors of the Second World War, and is twice the number murdered by Stalin's regime in the Soviet Union. As a proportion of the population that lost their lives, the Black Death caused unrivalled mortality." But, as Ormrod stresses, it is tricky to know how many died: "It is agonizingly difficult to get good population data for medieval Europe: even for England, where the information is especially rich. No one took death tolls so we have to develop models of mortality from sources like clergy lists, manor court rolls and tax records."

And there was more to come to add to the death toll as there were further outbreaks

throughout the 14th century. The most horrific – called the 'Children's Plague' due to the high mortality rate among young children – came only ten years later, in the early 1360s. Even as late as the 17th century, plague could strike at any time, as observed with the Great Plague of London in 1665–66. The people of Europe had no choice but to learn to live with the constant presence of death. It was a subject that appeared more and more

in art, with depictions of skeletons or figures of death standing behind or hand-in-hand with the humans in paintings. By embracing death, people learned not only to live with the knowledge that a bout of plague could hit at any point, but they learned to survive when it did.

Never have humans been through a natural disaster so destructive, so epochal, and where they were left so powerless, as the 1348–50 outbreak of the Black Death. ☀

## SPREADING DISEASE

# WHAT WAS THE PESTILENCE?

Popular opinion about how the plague was spread has recently been challenged – but what's the truth behind the story?

From God's wrath to fleas, there have been many culprits of the Black Death. It has been suggested that it could have been influenza, smallpox, typhus, even anthrax, but it is widely believed to be a form of bubonic plague spread by a bacterium named *Yersinia pestis*. It travels through the air and can also be transmitted through infected fleas. If the lungs became infected, the mortality rate shot up to around 90 per cent.

For many years, it has been accepted that these fleas were carried by rats, which at that time were found in every medieval town in Europe. However, controversial recent research claims that, as the disease originated in China, giant gerbils may be to blame.

Professor Nils Christian Stenseth of the University of Oslo explains that the specific weather conditions in Asia were more suited for the gerbil to prosper, rather than the rat: "You would need warm summers,

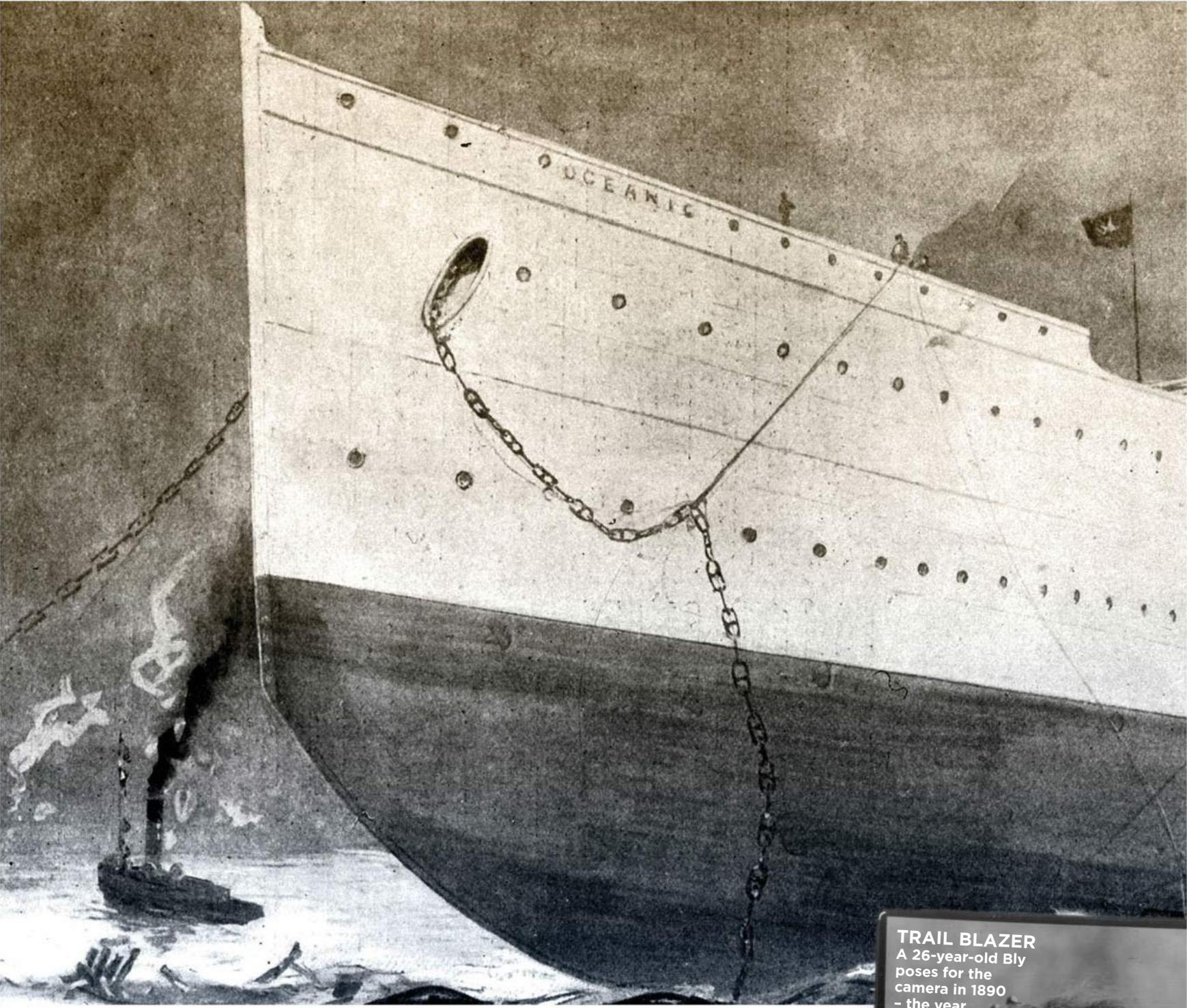
with not too much precipitation. Dry but not too dry."

This theory, however, has not changed history quite yet. Historian Ole Jorgen Benedictow states that "The theory that the Black Death and subsequent plague epidemics arose among gerbils in east Asia should not be taken seriously. It is based on a series of erroneous or false historical assertions."

Professor Mark Ormrod of York University is keen to point out that the gerbil theory is still only a hypothesis, and has not been definitively proven: "All of this is a reminder of the many uncertainties that remain about the nature and spread of the Black Death pandemic."

**DIVIDED OPINION**  
Was the plague spread by rats (left) or giant gerbils (right)?





# AROUND THE WORLD IN 72 DAYS

GETTY X1, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS X2

**Pat Kinsella** meets Nellie Bly, the journalist who went around the world in less than 80 days, racing against the fictitious Phileas Fogg and a very real rival travelling in the opposite direction...

**TRAIL BLAZER**  
A 26-year-old Bly poses for the camera in 1890 – the year she finished her trip





“Never having failed,  
**I could not picture  
what failure meant...**”

*Nellie Bly*



**FULL STEAM AHEAD**

Among the 1,710 passengers aboard the *Oceanic* when it arrived in San Francisco in January 1890 was Nellie Bly, near the end of her round-the-world adventure



## GREAT ADVENTURES NELLIE BLY

With his 1873 classic *Around the World in Eighty Days*, master raconteur Jules Verne skilfully captured the excitement of an era in which people could feel the planet shrinking beneath their feet.

In 1869, the First Transcontinental Railroad began sending trains across America, and the Suez Canal opened, connecting the Mediterranean to the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. A year later, Indian railways linked up across the sub-continent – creating a news story that acted as the imaginary catalyst for Verne's plot. It was this that led his protagonist, Phileas Fogg, to set a wager that he could circle the globe from London's Reform Club, door-to-door, in 80 days.

No one tested the plausibility of this feat for 17 years until, in 1889, two people took up the challenge at once. Shockingly for the age, both were women. Neither would have been allowed through the doors of Fogg's gentlemen's club, but both proved more than a match for any pretend Victorian globe-trotting toff, and one in particular specialised in jumping gender hurdles.

### LEARNING TO BLY

Nellie Bly was born Elizabeth Jane Cochran in 1864, in a small Pennsylvanian town named after her father, Judge Michael Cochran. She was his 13th child, and her early life experiences ignited a fierce fire in her belly. Known as 'Pink' as a youngster, because she was so often dressed in the colour, Cochran would become a trailblazer, carving a career at the cutting edge of journalism under a new name: Nellie Bly.

After the death of her father when she was six, the family fell on hard times. Her mother remarried, but the relationship turned abusive and ended in divorce. Cochran had to leave school and abandon her ambitions of being a teacher. In 1880, the family moved to Pittsburgh, where they took in boarders to make ends meet.

In 1885, Cochran read an article in *The Pittsburgh Dispatch* that would change her life. The viciously misogynistic piece, 'What Girls Are Good For', criticised women for attempting to gain an education, forge a career or stray too far from home. The writer even expressed supposedly tongue-in-cheek support for the practice of girl-child infanticide. Under the pseudonym 'Lonely Orphan Girl', Cochran sent a response that so impressed the editor, George Madden, with its combination of incandescent rage and dignified prose that he published both the letter and an invite for the writer to come in to the office. Madden suggested she write a full riposte to the offending article, and the resulting feature, 'The Girl Puzzle' led to a full-time job.

Madden suggested the nom de plume, Nelly Bly (from a popular song), which became Nellie. Shunning assignments that focussed on fashion, gardening and theatre – traditional fodder for female writers – she instead tackled prickly social issues. Criticism and threats from

### THE MAIN PLAYERS



#### ELIZABETH COCHRAN SEAMAN

Better known by her nom de plume, Nellie Bly. A pioneering investigative journalist who championed women's and children's rights, among other causes.



#### ELIZABETH BISLAND

The *Cosmopolitan* dispatched this female reporter in the opposite direction to Bly to try and trump her time. By reputation, Bisland was a serious writer.



#### JOSEPH PULITZER

The Hungarian-born newspaper publisher famous for setting up the Pulitzer Prizes for journalistic excellence. As owner of the *New York World* (among others), he assisted Bly across the US.

#### JULES VERNE

French author of *Around the World in Eighty Days*. Told Bly that he'd written his book after seeing a newspaper advert for a Thomas Cook holiday taking people around the globe.

#### JOHN A COCKERILL

Managing Editor of the *New York World*, who reluctantly accepted Bly's proposal that she should attempt to go around the world quicker than Verne's fictitious Fogg.

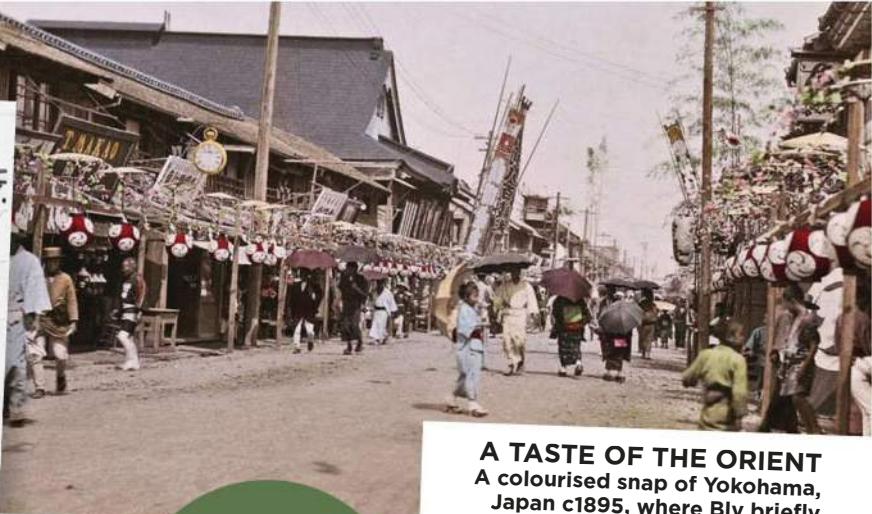
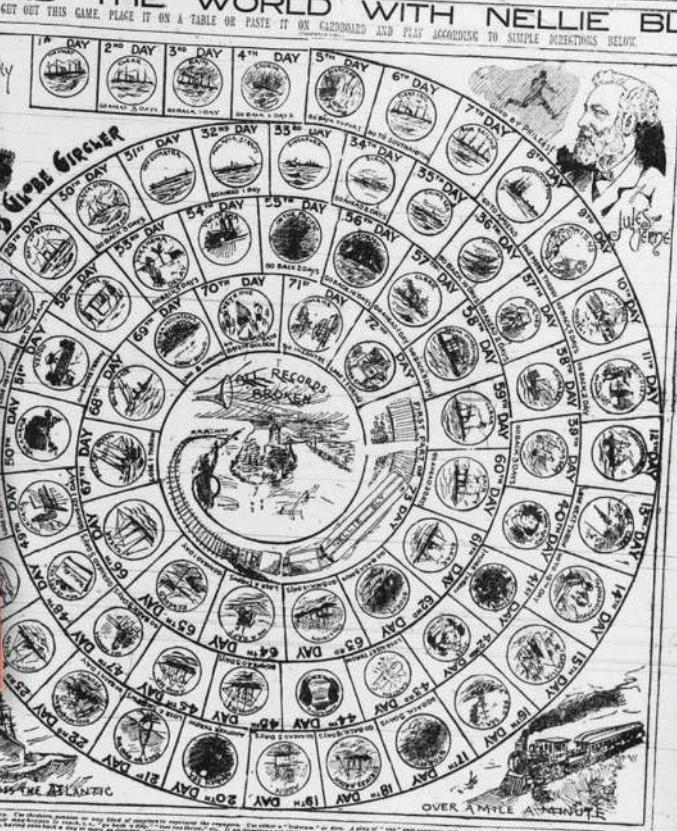
### BON VOYAGE

BELOW: After her return, Bly is photographed in her travel garb – complete with her super-compact bag

RIGHT: An early edition of the book that inspired Bly's adventure, Jules Verne's *Around the World in Eighty Days*

FAR RIGHT: 'Round the World with Nellie Bly' – a board game of Bly's trip, with squares for each day of her journey





**A TASTE OF THE ORIENT**  
A colourised snap of Yokohama, Japan c1895, where Bly briefly stopped near the end of her voyage

**24,899**

The distance, in miles, that Bly travelled during her 72-day odyssey around the world in 1889-90

advertisers saw Bly reassigned, which prompted her indignant resignation. She then travelled to Mexico, working as a freelance foreign correspondent, until her writing – which was sharply critical of President Porfirio Díaz's dictatorship – came to attention of the government and she was forced to leave.

Back in the US, Bly scored her first major scoop after accepting an undercover assignment for Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World* and deliberately getting committed to New York's infamous Blackwell's Island women's asylum. She spent ten days collecting content about the abuse and inhuman treatment that was meted out before being rescued by the *World*. Her subsequent article 'Ten Days in a Madhouse' directly led to a wave of reforms and an injection of cash into the treatment of the mentally ill.

By 1887, Bly had established herself as a pioneer in the dangerous field of immersive investigative journalism, which remained her lifelong speciality. She continued to rail against various injustices, including dire working conditions for factory women and the fate of unwanted infants. In 1889, after reading *Around the World in Eighty Days*, she pitched an idea to her editor that would crystallise her reputation as a trailblazer for her sex. If she could pull it off...

## FICTION INTO FACT

"It is impossible for you to do it," the *World's* Managing Editor, John A Cockerill, barked at Bly when she proposed her round-the-world speed attempt. "You are a woman and would need a protector, and even if it were possible for you to travel alone you would need to carry so much baggage that it would detain you in making rapid changes... No one but a man can do this."

Bly's response was characteristically blunt. "Very well," she said. "Start the man and I'll start the same day for some other newspaper and beat him." Cockerill relented.

Bly began her journey within the year, leaving New Jersey on a steamship bound for England. She took a single piece of baggage, measuring 41 by 18 cms, containing bare essentials – underwear, toiletries, writing materials, dressing gown, tennis blazer, flask and cup, two caps, three veils, slippers, needle and thread, handkerchiefs. But no gun. "I had such a strong



**CHARING CROSS**  
Bly spent a few hours in London on 22 November 1899, before heading to Charing Cross Station by horse-drawn cab to catch a train south



## GREAT ADVENTURES NELLIE BLY

belief in the world's greeting me as I greeted it that I refused to arm myself," she wrote.

The rough crossing was a rude awakening for the 25-year-old first-time traveller. Horribly ill, Bly stayed in her cabin so long the Captain checked she was still alive. Eventually, she found her sea legs, and six days later arrived in Southampton, where Tracy Greaves, the *World's* London correspondent, had exciting news.

Jules Verne himself had heard of Bly's quest and wanted to meet her in his hometown of Amiens, France. This was both an honour and a gamble, necessitating a deviation from her meticulously planned route. Bly travelled non-stop for two days to make the appointment, by road, rail and boat via London to Boulogne, and then Amiens, where Verne and his wife were waiting at the station.

Leaving Verne's home in the middle of the night, Bly caught a 1.30am train across France and Italy to the port of Brindisi. Here she boarded the *Victoria*, a steamer that took her through the Mediterranean to Port Said in Egypt, at the new Suez Canal's northern end.

**£200**

The amount of money Bly had when she departed, plus a little gold and a few US dollars

Here, she was critical of fellow passengers swatting away beggars with their walking canes.

Once her boat had refuelled, it continued through the canal into the Red Sea, stopping at the Port of Aden on the Arabian Peninsula, where Bly went exploring. Next stop was Colombo in Sri Lanka, from where she fired off a report via telegraph to the *World*.

In between access to telegraph stations, Bly mailed updates to the paper. As the roving reporter's dispatches often took a long time to arrive in New York, the *World* used inventive ways to keep interest in the story alive, such as running a sweepstake asking readers to guess exactly how long

Bly's trip would take. The grand prize was an expenses-paid trip to Europe, and over half a million people had a punt.

After an agonising five-day wait in Colombo for a boat that would take her the 3,500 miles by sea to Hong Kong, Bly finally set sail for China on the *Oriental*. En route, the ship stopped at Singapore, where the lonely traveller bought herself a companion: a fez-wearing miniature monkey she called McGinty.

Another overnight delay in Singapore had Bly fretting about her connection in Hong Kong, but the ship made good progress when it finally set sail – albeit through a violent monsoon storm that created enormous seas. They arrived safely – and early, just before Christmas Day – however Bly had an unwelcome surprise awaiting her.

### A REAL RACE

Having caught whiff of the *World's* round-the-world escapade, a rival publication – the *Cosmopolitan* – hastily commissioned another female journalist to try and beat Bly's time.

With just six hours notice, Elizabeth Bisland (aged 28) left New York on the same day as Bly, but she travelled west while the *World's* champion went east. The competition intensified public interest in what was now a real race, but Bly remained unaware of the live contest she was in until arriving in Hong Kong, where she was told that Bisland had passed through several days earlier. She was not impressed by the news, and a visit to a leper colony and the Temple of the Dead did little to lighten her mood.

"I am not racing," Bly claimed. "I promised to do the trip in 75 days, and I will do it." However,

## RECORD ROUTE

**Bly mapped out her route carefully, but only bought a ticket for the first leg, so her schedule could be adjusted at any time. Bly and Bisland's great adventures took place before the dawn of flight, but in an era buzzing with copious steam-driven transport options. Completely reliant on ships and railways, however, both women could do little to avoid the occasional setbacks that threatened their progress, and both faced delays in Asia.**

**1** 14 NOVEMBER 1889,  
30 SECONDS AFTER 9.40PM

**New Jersey, US**

Bly's meticulously recorded journey begins as the *Augusta Victoria*, a steamer of the Hamburg America Line, pulls away from Hoboken dock, bound for the UK.

**2** 22 NOVEMBER  
London, UK

Bly remarks on the fine buildings, hurrying people and beautifully paved streets of the capital city as she rushes to Charing Cross Station to catch a train for the south coast, and a ferry to the continent.

**3** 23 NOVEMBER  
Amiens, France

After landing in Calais, Bly takes a train to Amiens on a risky diversion to meet Jules Verne and spends an evening at the inspirational author's house.

**4** 25 NOVEMBER  
Brindisi, Italy

After taking a non-stop (except to take on coal and water) train from Calais to Brindisi, Bly catches the steamship *Victoria* and sets sail across the Mediterranean Sea to Port Said in Egypt.

**5** 28 NOVEMBER  
Ismailia, Egypt

Bly passes through the Suez Canal, which has only been open for 20 years, to arrive at Aden on 3 December.

**6** 8 DECEMBER  
Colombo, Sri Lanka

Still on schedule, Bly arrives in Sri Lanka (then Ceylon), where she is held up for five days waiting for another boat to arrive before hers can leave.

**7** 18 DECEMBER  
Singapore

Evidently feeling the loneliness of the long distance solo traveller, Bly buys a miniature monkey and calls it McGinty.

**8** CHRISTMAS 1889  
Hong Kong, then UK

Back on track after several delays, Bly's good humour is short-lived when she discovers that she has a rival round-the-worlder: Elizabeth Bisland from *Cosmopolitan*.

**9** 7 JANUARY 1890  
Yokohama, Japan

Having seen in the New Year aboard a ship travelling between Hong Kong and Japan,



comments made while she was in the clutches of a delay-causing storm during the trip from Hong Kong to Yokohama in Japan, suggest otherwise. "I'd rather go back to New York dead than not a winner," she said.

## PHOTO FINISH

Despite more heavy weather on Bly's final boat ride, across the Pacific from Japan to San Francisco on the White Star Line ship *Oceanic*, she arrived back on American soil on 21 January, a day ahead of schedule. However, snowstorms had slowed rail travel. Disaster. Bly could feel Bisland's breath on her back.

But unbeknown to Bly, her rival's luck had just run out. In England, Bisland learnt that the fast German steamer *Ems*, due to take her from Southampton to New York, had been cancelled. She was forced to divert via Ireland to catch the much slower ship, the *Bothnia*.

Meanwhile, the *World*'s owner, Pulitzer, had chartered a private train to bring Bly home in style. The 'Miss Nellie Bly Special' set records of its own during that final leg, completing the 2,577-mile journey in 69 hours, passing crowds, to deliver Bly back to New Jersey on 25 January 1890, at 3.51pm – 72 days, 6 hours, 11 minutes

and 14 seconds after leaving. Bly had bested Fogg's fictional journey time by over seven days. Bisland arrived five days later. ☺

## GET HOOKED

### LISTEN

For Bly's 151st birthday in 2015, Karen O, lead singer of the Yeah Yeah Yeahs, penned *Nellie*, a song to accompany a dynamic Google doodle. The song and animation is widely available online.

### READ AND WATCH

Matthew Goodman's bestseller *Eighty Days: Nellie Bly and Elizabeth Bisland's History-Making Race Around the World* is being developed for TV.

## WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

The escapade worked out well for Verne, with *Around the World in Eighty Days* being re-issued in over ten new editions after Bly's race. In 1895, Bly married millionaire manufacturer Robert Seaman, over 40 years her senior, retired from writing and became a businesswoman. After Seaman died his business went bankrupt, and she returned to journalism, covering women's suffrage and spending a stint reporting from the frontline during WWI.

Bisland also continued to write. Both women died of pneumonia and were buried in New York City's Woodlawn Cemetery.

### WELCOME HOME

LEFT: The *World*'s front page on 26 January 1890 celebrates Bly's feat  
BELOW: San Francisco as it was in 1890, when Bly passed through



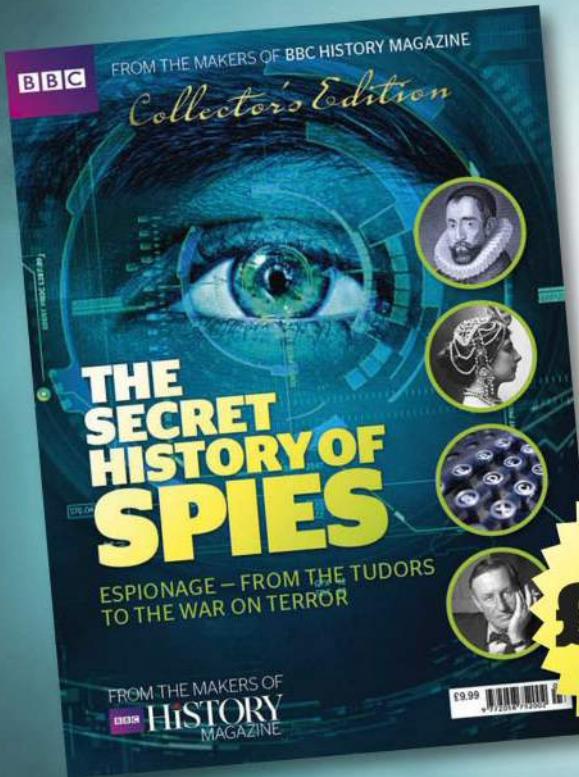
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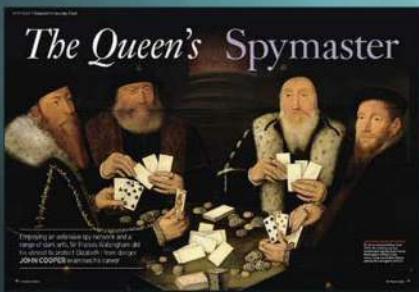
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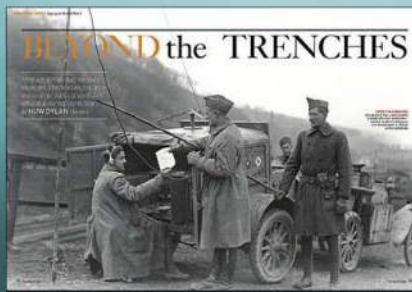
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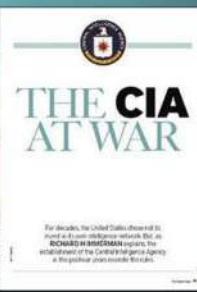
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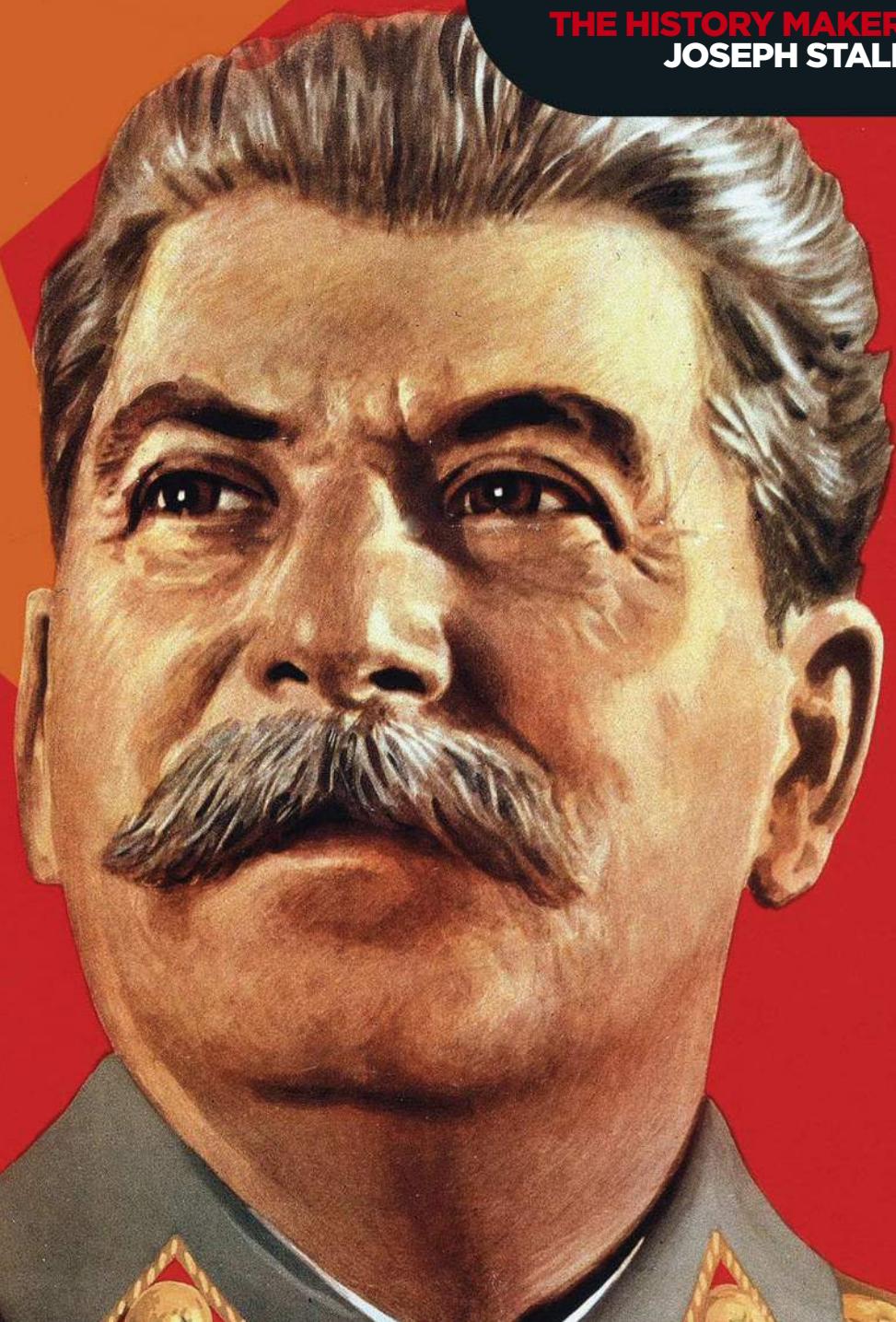
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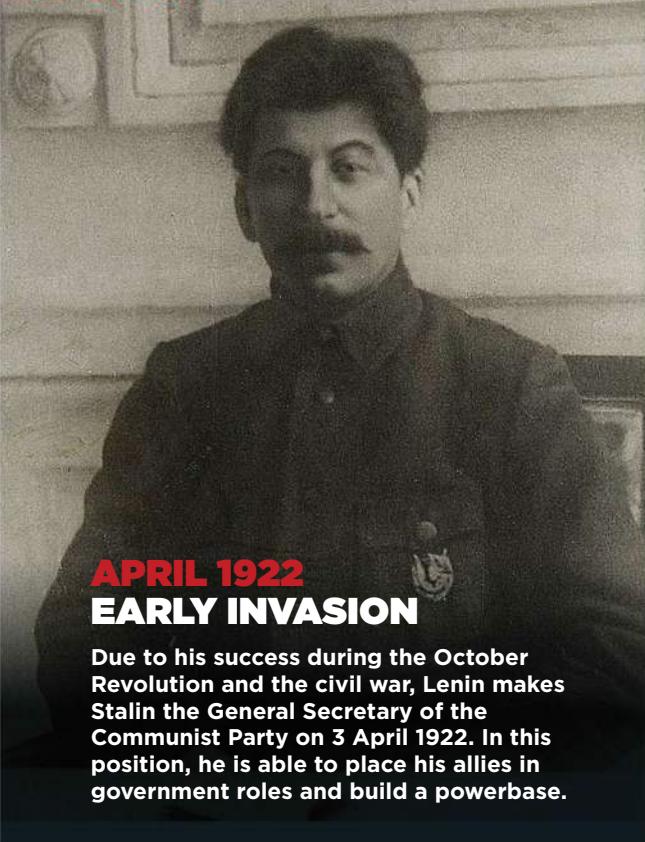
STALIN IS  
OUR BANNER!

The famous image of Stalin in military uniform adorned posters and banners across the USSR as he built an all-powerful, god-like persona



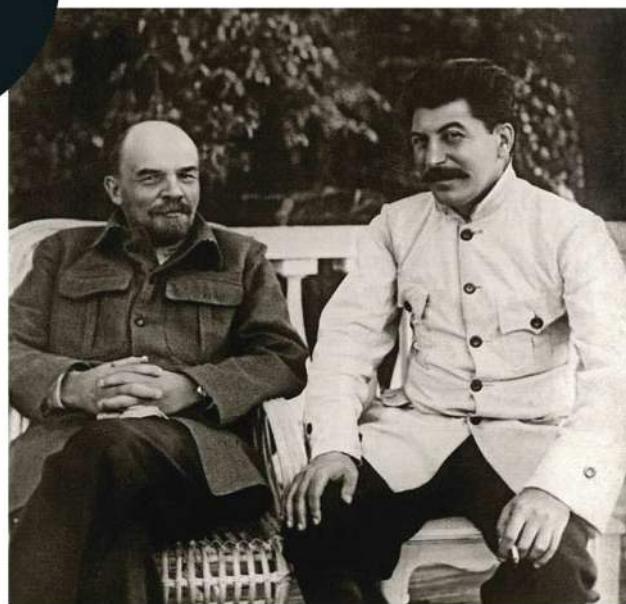
# MAN OF STEEL JOSEPH STALIN

The charming cobbler's son from Georgia became one of the most powerful, feared and ruthless men of the 20th century. **Adam Rees** looks at the life of one of history's most terrible tyrants...



## APRIL 1922 EARLY INVASION

Due to his success during the October Revolution and the civil war, Lenin makes Stalin the General Secretary of the Communist Party on 3 April 1922. In this position, he is able to place his allies in government roles and build a powerbase.



## JANUARY 1924 POWER AND BETRAYAL

Though Stalin doesn't immediately succeed Lenin (above left) after the leader's death on 21 January 1924, it is the moment when Joseph Stalin begins to display his ruthlessness with both enemies and allies. He uses key party members, Kamenev and Zinoviev, to isolate his main rival, Trotsky, and block Lenin's damning testament from going public. He will later eject the pair from the party with the help of two other allies who, following a pattern of betrayal, will in turn become victims of Stalin when they oppose his plans.

## NOVEMBER 1932 WIDOWED AGAIN

On 9 November 1932, having argued with her husband at a party for the 15th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, Stalin's second wife Nadya commits suicide.



**T**he dust was settling in the aftermath of World War II. Adolf Hitler was dead, but, just as Europe was celebrating the demise of one monstrous foe, another enemy was preparing to rise from within the Allies' own ranks. This dictator would soak eastern Europe in blood and destruction, and prove himself to be just as formidable an opponent as Hitler. He was the Premier of the Soviet Union and leader of the Communist Bolshevik Party, Joseph Stalin, whose people worshipped him as a terrible, all-powerful god.

The future idol was born Joseph Vissarionovich Djugashvili on 6 December 1878, in the small town of Gori, Georgia, with two of the toes on his left foot joined together. He originally trained to be a priest, however he discovered atheism and Marxism at an early age, quit his pursuit of priesthood and joined the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party at the age of 20. He adopted the alias Koba, and took up the revolutionary manifesto of Communism with verve, which led to his banishment to Siberia in

1902 – the first of six stints in exile – and raising money for the cause by robbing banks.

### MAN OF STEEL

By 1913, Koba began to refer to himself as Stalin, meaning 'Man of Steel'. He was among the leading members of the Bolshevik Party, led by Vladimir Lenin, which seized power in Petrograd in 1917, following the power vacuum left after the abdication of the Tsar. Behind the supreme leadership of Lenin and firebrand revolutionary Leon Trotsky, the mustachioed, shaggy-haired Stalin came into his own. His organisational and practical skills aided the Bolsheviks' fight for survival after the end of Russia's disastrous involvement in World War I. The party then came under attack from all manner of enemies during a civil war that would last until 1922. Throughout this time Stalin was put in charge of Tsaritsyn, a city in the Lower Volga region, looking after the vital supplies of food and oil from southern Russia needed to feed the population and, above all, the Bolshevik military, aka the Red Army.

Instructed to hold the city at all costs, Stalin ruthlessly executed anyone he distrusted, including military leaders who were key to the city's defence. Despite making the situation worse, Lenin admired this merciless desire to defend Bolshevism, and made Stalin General Secretary of the party in 1922.

From the ashes of civil war, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was formed of Russia and its neighbouring Communist countries. Like the Russian Empire of old, the Soviet Union was an autocratic state ruled from Moscow, but instead of a Tsar at the head, there now sat a frail, ageing Lenin.

Stalin thrived in his role as General Secretary, and Lenin began to fear that the Georgian would become the future leader of the party. In an attempt to derail Stalin, the Bolshevik chairman orchestrated a letter calling for the General Secretary's dismissal, but fate would give Stalin a chance to save his name. Lenin died of a stroke in 1924, before the letter could be widely circulated. Stalin pounced, taking personal care of Lenin's body and placing it in a mausoleum, making it appear he was a faithful servant of this fallen hero. It put him in prime position to succeed against his closest opponent, then the commissar of foreign affairs and war, Trotsky. While the bespectacled demagogue Trotsky was the favourite, cunning Stalin managed to win over leading members of the party using his infamous charm. He turned them against Trotsky's mission to spread the Bolshevik cause across the globe. Instead, Stalin's plan to consolidate power and strive for an industrial revolution won out.

### HITLER

**"[Stalin] began as a small clerk, and he has never stopped being a clerk. Stalin owes nothing to rhetoric. He governs from his office, thanks to a bureaucracy that obeys his every nod and gesture."**





The trial of the 21, held in 1938, was the last of Stalin's Great Purge trials

## 1936-1938 THE GREAT PURGE

Though Stalin and the NKVD rule the Soviet Union with an iron fist in the early 1930s, the murder of Sergei Kirov on 1 December 1934 plunges the country into a state of terror and mass murder. The leader uses the murder of his close ally as a pretext for the Great Purge, which lasts from 1936-38, during which millions are murdered at the behest of Stalin, earning both he and his state bloodthirsty reputations that will resonate through history.

## “The idea of a concentration camp is excellent.”

Joseph Stalin

Trotsky was removed from his post and, with Lenin's final damning testament brushed under the carpet, Stalin now stood alone as de facto leader of the Soviet Union. His new allies in the party would soon regret their decision to side with such a cunning, merciless manipulator.

### FORCED LABOUR

The cornerstone of Stalin's vision for the USSR was to transform this vast empire of backward farming but limitless manpower into an industrial powerhouse. Peasants would be forced into large, collectivised farms to maximise grain production. The profits from the land would fuel new manufacturing centres, whose heavy goods such as tractors, planes and military vehicles would put the USSR alongside the despised capitalist countries of the West. The first in a series of Five-Year Plans began in 1928 but, when things didn't go according to Stalin's meticulous design, he unleashed the full power of his regime.

The Bolshevik party spread its tentacles into every corner of the countryside – the secret

police (NKVD) seized grain and executed anyone deemed an enemy of the state. People destroyed their livestock and hid grain in the hope that Comrade Stalin, or 'Uncle Joe' as the West came to call him, would listen to their plight. Instead, he lived up to his 'Man of Steel' moniker and left them to starve, as famine gripped the country. The worst hit was the Ukraine, where between 2 and 7 million were killed in the Holodomor – 'extermination by hunger'. People even turned to cannibalism. Some of the party members responsible for this misery were appalled when they witnessed the disaster while venturing south in armoured trains for their holidays.

Indifferent to the suffering, Stalin and the Bolsheviks lived comfortably in Moscow where, it's said, they indulged in parties and revelled in free love with each other's partners. Aside from their modest clothing, the scenes were not dissimilar to the lives of the Tsars. Indeed, for all his work to set up a socialist state, Stalin often referred to himself as being like a Tsar and forebodingly spoke of his admiration of the monstrous Ivan the Terrible.

## CLASH OF THE TITANS STALIN VERSUS HITLER

The war on the Eastern Front was the most savage conflict in history, claiming the lives of millions of soldiers and civilians. It also saw two of the 20th century's most notorious figures square up, as they led their nations into four years of bloodshed. Stalin's blunders led to catastrophic defeats in the opening months of Adolf Hitler's audacious 1941 invasion of Russia. But he gradually ceded control to his generals, who turned the tide at Moscow, Stalingrad and Kursk, inspiring the Red Army troops to take back Soviet territory and move on Germany itself. While Stalin regained composure, the tables turned on his opponent.

Despite this rivalry between the heads of Communism and National Socialism (Hitler was especially vocal in his disdain for Russians and the "Jewish conspiracy" – Bolshevism), Stalin had greatly admired his foe before the war. He even had some respect for Hitler's brutal leadership as the Third Reich fell to Soviet tanks. It was Hitler's political murders during the Night of Long Knives (1934) that influenced Stalin's own bloody purge of his party and colleagues. Stalin remarked: "Some fellow that Hitler! Splendid! That's a deed of some skill!"

Stalin trusted the Führer thanks to the non-aggression pact they signed in 1939. He had so much faith, in fact, that when the first reports came in of the 1941 invasion, Stalin refused to believe it, insisting it must have been done without Hitler's knowledge.

Even after his forces had vanquished those that had laid waste to Russia and killed millions of its people, Stalin would not condemn Hitler like others had. His reaction to Hitler's suicide was to lament: "So the bastard's dead? Too bad we didn't capture him alive." And, in 1945, he said of his adversary: "I can't agree [Hitler] was mad. Hitler was a gifted man. Only a gifted man could unite the German people."



German and Soviet politicians, led by Stalin (centre), smile together after signing the non-aggression pact of 1939



## JUNE 1941 NAZI INVASION

Stalin's reaction to Operation Barbarossa on 22 June 1941 has gone down in legend. After initial confusion and denial, early defeats cause Stalin to, seemingly, fall into a bleak depression and hide away for two days. With no decisions being made, Molotov, Beria and other Politburo members go to his house, where they find a dishevelled, broken leader. The men have the chance to replace Stalin, but instead tell him he is needed to lead the country. It has since been speculated that this was always Stalin's intention.



German soldiers cross the Neman River near Kaunas (now in Lithuania), on their advance into Soviet territory

In his apartment in the Kremlin, Stalin lived comfortably with his wife Nadya and their children. However, two deaths would change everything. Following an argument at a party, the troubled Nadya took her own life, before one of Stalin's closest friends, Kirov, was assassinated in mysterious circumstances. Though some suspect Stalin's involvement in the latter, he used it as fuel to rid himself of any enemies, real or imagined, in one of the biggest, most vicious purges in history.

With scenes that would inspire fictional dystopias, the USSR became a police state. The party was purged of anyone who had ever stood against Stalin, with infamous show trials deciding the culprits' fate. Trials scripted by Stalin were televised to the world, as high-ranking Bolsheviks admitted to ludicrous charges of spying for the exiled Trotsky. Off camera, these captive party members were told their cooperation would save their lives. However, the premier would later rescind those promises.

No one was safe. Stalin's closest associates in the party, his family, the army and ordinary people thousands of miles from Moscow were all targeted. Instead of being told who

to arrest, Stalin and his merciless chief of the NKVD Nikolai Yezhov gave out quotas of people they wanted disposed of: whether exiled to the Gulag concentration camps in Siberia, or executed along with their families. If an accident occurred or quotas of production fell short, families and neighbours were encouraged to denounce each other as foreign saboteurs. Even Yezhov, who had the blood of hundreds of thousands on his hands, was executed and replaced by the sadistic Lavrenty Beria.

Stalin, who worked relentlessly signing death warrants into the early hours, had created a state ruled by fear, and was now untouchable by anyone in the USSR. However, the biggest threat to his Bolshevik utopia was to come from an equally callous regime to the west.

## WORLD WAR II

Believing his borders were safe from the Nazi war machine after signing the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of non-aggression in 1939, Stalin was seemingly alone in being surprised when Germany's Operation Barbarossa saw the largest invasion in history sweep into Soviet territory in 1941. The purged Red Army was completely routed in early battles, with millions



## JULY 1945 BREAK FROM THE ALLIES

At the Potsdam Conference, in July 1945, Stalin makes his intentions clear to the West. Though he got along with British PM Winston Churchill (above left) and US President Franklin Roosevelt during wartime, relations between the Allies sour at Potsdam, notably with Roosevelt's successor Harry Truman (above centre). Stalin refuses to budge over the question of what will become of Soviet-occupied Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Eastern Bloc countries. He also rejects suggestions to allow free elections, and brings an 'iron curtain' down over Europe, marking the start of the Cold War.

killed or taken prisoner, compounded by Stalin's calamitous tactics and decisions, refusing to give any ground to the invaders. Eventually, Stalin ceded control to those generals he hadn't purged, most notably the celebrated Georgy Zhukov, who successfully defended Moscow, before destroying an entire German army at the pivotal Battle of Stalingrad (1942-43). Over the next two years, Hitler's forces were bloodily pushed back, culminating in the Battle of Berlin in May 1945, Hitler's suicide and Germany's surrender. Stalin came out of World War II a hero, but his lust for global power quickly turned him into the most feared man on the planet.

## IRON CURTAIN

The post-war years saw the Man of Steel brutally impose Communism on eastern Europe. He brought down what Winston Churchill referred to as an 'iron curtain' between East and West, drawing the battle lines of the Cold War that would pit the USSR against the USA for the next 44 years. Stalin continued to exert his control and cult of power across his own country, trading in his simple buttoned-up tunics for a lavish general's uniform overflowing with medals. He strove for parity with opponents in the West, demanding a nuclear weapon and kicking off an arms race that would see his tyranny spread far beyond the limits of his borders.

In 1953, the man who had inflicted such brutality died aged 74, after suffering a stroke. He had succeeded in making Russia a world superpower, but he also left a legacy of terror and bloodshed on an almost incomprehensible scale. ◉



## LENIN

**"Stalin is excessively rude, and this defect, which can be freely tolerated in our midst and in contacts among us Communists, becomes a defect which cannot be tolerated in one holding the position of General Secretary."**



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Who was worse, Joseph Stalin or Adolf Hitler?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com



### MARCH 1953 DEATH OF THE PREMIER

Joseph Stalin dies asleep on his couch on 5 March 1953. Despite having numerous large residences, he generally preferred to sleep on large couches. His funeral is held on 9 March, when mourners fill Moscow's Red Square.

**"We are 50 or 100 years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this distance in ten years. Either we do it, or they will crush us."**

Joseph Stalin



#### FAMILY PORTRAIT

Joseph Stalin poses with his son Vasily and daughter Svetlana, both children from his second marriage

## KITH AND KIN THE STALIN FAMILY

While still known as Koba, Joseph Stalin married his wife Ekaterina in 1906, but she died just a year later of TB. At her funeral he chillingly commented: "This creature softened my heart of stone. She died and with her died my last warm feelings for people." While exiled in Siberia in 1910, he fathered an illegitimate child and also met a fellow exile's daughter, Nadezhda Alliluyeva, who became his second wife in 1919 at 23 years his junior. 'Nadya' suffered mental and physical health problems,

which Stalin failed to understand while making matters worse with his furious drive towards dictatorship.

Stalin never got on with his eldest son from his first marriage, Yakov, and even mocked him son after a failed suicide attempt, saying: "He can't even shoot straight." Stalin's resentment towards Yakov reached its zenith when he was captured during the early battles of Operation Barbarossa, as his father was urging his troops to fight to the last. Yakov

died in captivity, allegedly throwing himself onto an electrified fence.

Stalin doted more on his son Vasily and daughter Svetlana, publicly and privately showing them affection and letting them sit on his knee in front of party members and foreign diplomats. However, following Nadya's death, their relationships became strained. Vasily became a fighter pilot and served during the Battle of Stalingrad (1942-43), while his beloved Svetlana would eventually defect to the US in 1967.

# Money makes the world go round

In the list of the world's all-time wealthiest there are both bad pennies and hearts of gold, as **Emily Brand** reveals...

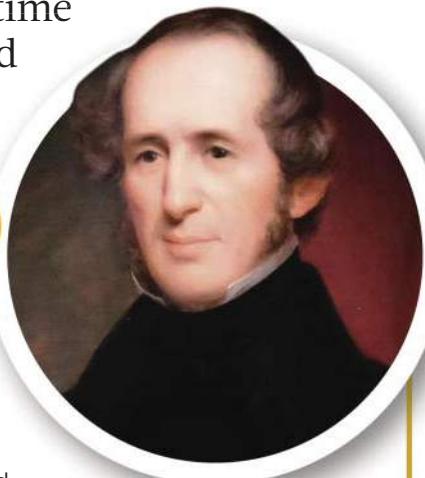
## CORNELIUS VANDERBILT

(1794-1877)

Vanderbilt, who was born in New York City, borrowed money to set up a ferry service as an enterprising teenager. Through determination (and luck) he slowly assumed management of various steamboat ventures, before buying stocks in railroads. Though often considered a 'robber baron', part of his legacy was the advancement of Vanderbilt University in Tennessee.

ESTIMATED 2015 WEALTH: £119 BILLION

10



## HENRY FORD

(1863-1947)

A farmer's son fascinated with machines, Ford worked with railroad cars and steam engines before experimenting with "horseless carriages" as an engineer in Detroit. Following two failed ventures, Ford Motor Company was established in 1903, and the introduction of the Model T made the motor car available to 'the great multitude', as well as making him a great personal fortune.

ESTIMATED 2015 WEALTH: £128 BILLION

By 1914, there were some 500,000 of Ford's Model Ts on the world's roads.



**ROAD TO RICHES**  
Henry Ford takes the wheel in one of his early automotive models, c1900

9

## WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR

(c1028-87)

Despite his illegitimate status, this 11th-century Norman nobleman secured his influence in France through inherited lands and marriage, before claiming the throne of England by conquest. Ruling from 1066-87, he generously bequeathed land and titles to his friends, setting them up in lavish style.

ESTIMATED 2015 WEALTH: £147 BILLION

7



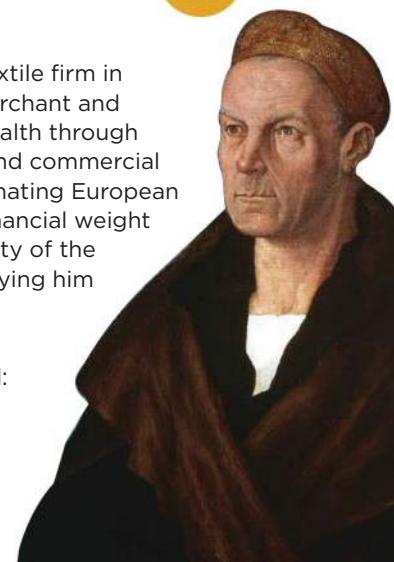
## JAKOB FUGGER

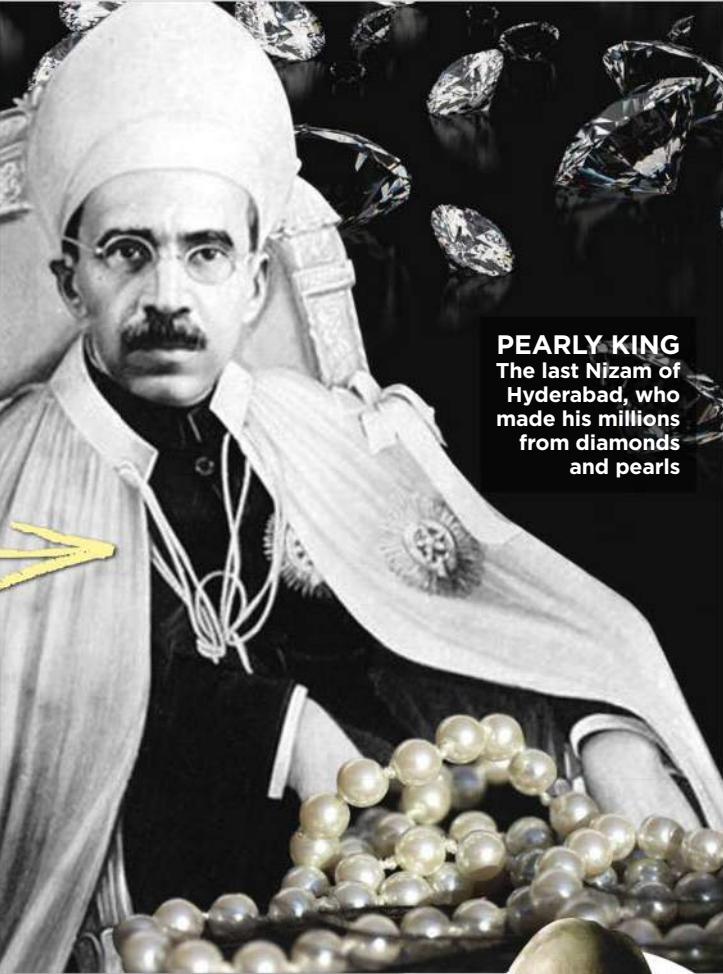
(1459-1525)

Expanding the family textile firm in his 30s, this German merchant and banker advanced his wealth through silver mining, banking and commercial trade – eventually dominating European business. He used his financial weight to promote the prosperity of the Habsburg monarchy, buying him considerable political influence too.

ESTIMATED 2015 WEALTH: £142 BILLION

8





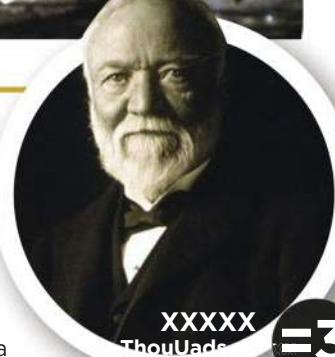
**PEARLY KING**  
The last Nizam of Hyderabad, who made his millions from diamonds and pearls

## ANDREW CARNEGIE

(1835-1919)

This Scottish-American tycoon worked up through the ranks of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, before setting up his own business to supply steel. His company sold for a record sum of \$250 million in 1901 but, by his death, his fortune had depleted thanks to vast philanthropic donations.

ESTIMATED 2015 WEALTH: £200 BILLION



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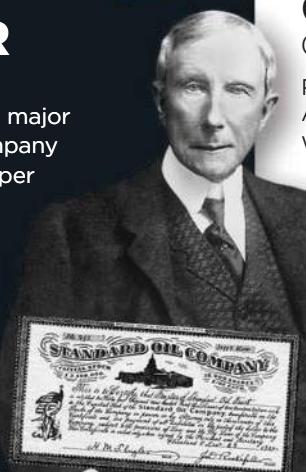
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## JOHN D ROCKEFELLER

(1839-1937)

Rockefeller was the founder and major shareholder in Standard Oil Company which, at its peak, produced 90 per cent of the US's oil. Following the success of his first refinery in Ohio, through canny investments he eventually became America's first billionaire. He donated at least \$550 million to charity.

ESTIMATED 2015 WEALTH: £220 BILLION



**OIL MASTER**  
Rockefeller, and shares of his Standard Oil Company

## NICHOLAS II OF RUSSIA

(1868-1918)

Inheriting the wealth of the centuries-old Romanov Imperial dynasty in 1894, Nicholas II was the last Tsar of Russia's glittering court. Much was tied up in the state, but also displayed in magnificent palaces, jewellery and works of art. Following the slaughter of Nicholas and his immediate family in 1918, most of the assets were seized by Bolshevik revolutionaries.

ESTIMATED 2015 WEALTH:  
£192 BILLION

**GOLDEN EGG**  
Nicholas stars on this Fabergé egg, made to mark his family's tercentenary



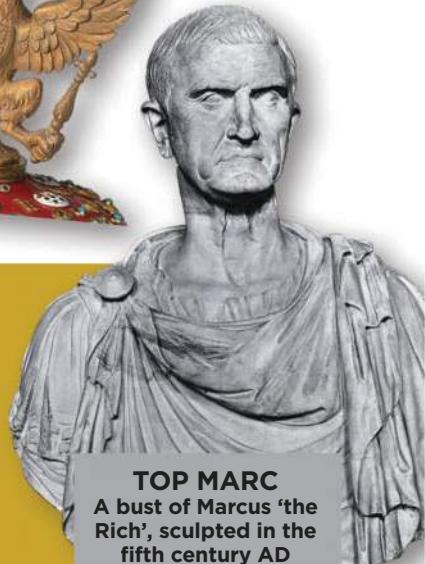
Nicholas is one of 18 Tsar portraits on this egg – one for each of his dynastic ancestors, except Ivan VI, who was only an infant at the time of his short rule.

## MARCUS LICINIUS CRASSUS 'THE RICH'

(c115-53 BC)

This Roman statesman had fingers in many pies, the most lucrative being property he had confiscated or bought at knock-down prices while it burned. Having profited from these "public calamities", his fortune was estimated at 200 million sestertes. It was reported that after his death in battle, his opponent punished his greed by filling his mouth with molten gold.

ESTIMATED 2015 WEALTH: £200 BILLION



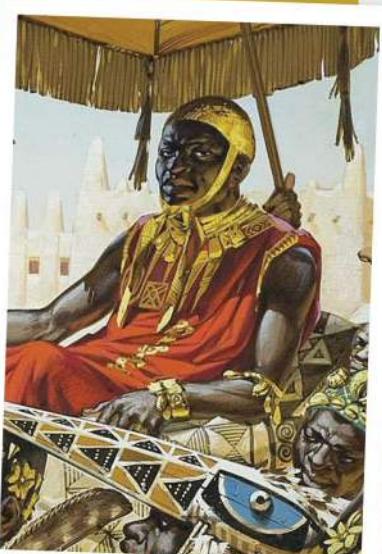
**TOP MARC**  
A bust of Marcus 'the Rich', sculpted in the fifth century AD

## MANSA MUSA I OF MALI

(c1280-c1337)

Ruling a kingdom that stretched across Africa, Mansa Musa I's lands produced the world's most abundant stores of gold and controlled vital trading routes. During a pilgrimage to Mecca, he astounded onlookers with a glittering parade of slaves and camels transporting gold staffs, bars and dust. But he was also noted for promoting scholarship and a system of law.

ESTIMATED 2015 WEALTH:  
£256 BILLION



**NB** The wealth given for each man of means is given in today's values. Their modern worth has been calculated based on estimations made about the individual's various assets, land and income. To put them into perspective, 2015's richest man, Bill Gates, is worth just over £51 billion.



# Coco before Chanel

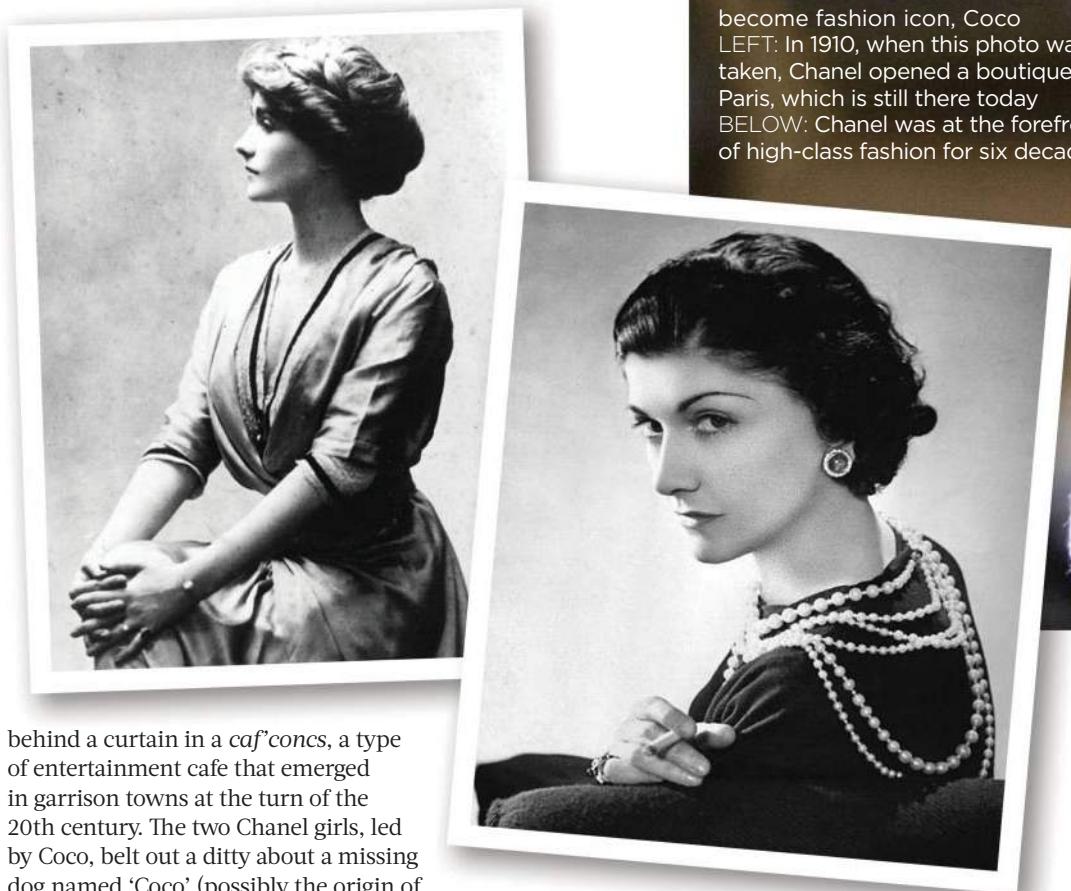
This literal rags-to-riches story looks as beautiful and elegant as the fashion designer's own style, as **Mel Sherwood** reveals...

**Q**uietly, with just the sound of birdsong and the rolling of a cart's wheels, two young sisters arrive at the Aubazine orphanage in central France in 1893. This is how Anne Fontaine's 2009 biopic *Coco Before Chanel*, starring Audrey Tautou, begins. One of the girls is Gabrielle Chanel, destined to become Coco, perhaps the 20th century's most celebrated fashion designer. But that is to come in her future. On this sombre day, the young Gabrielle is greeted by black-and-white-habited nuns, and ushered inside the abbey, a stone building of simple design and austere furnishings. A fitting location for the future fashion designer – who would become famous for her neutral colour palettes and simple, clean silhouettes – to grow up.

The orphanage may have been a key influence on Chanel's style, but she was greatly ashamed of her time there. As an adult, Chanel would refer to the nuns who raised her as 'aunts', in just one of the many euphemisms and mistruths she used to disguise her less-than-glamorous upbringing. Despite their time in an orphanage, these two Chanel girls, along with their brothers and another sister (who may have also grown up with the nuns), were not orphans. Though their mother had died at just 32 – after a decade on the road with Chanel's father, a travelling salesman, and six pregnancies – their father lived. Chanel, however, never saw him again.

## MAKING CONNECTIONS

Anne Fontaine's movie rejoins Chanel's story again 15 years later. Now a young woman, she walks out from



behind a curtain in a *caf'conc*, a type of entertainment cafe that emerged in garrison towns at the turn of the 20th century. The two Chanel girls, led by Coco, belt out a ditty about a missing dog named 'Coco' (possibly the origin of her nickname). This particular *caf'conc* was in a town in central France, Moulins, where Gabrielle and her sister were working as seamstresses during the day and, as the movie would have it, entertaining military men by night.

As a seamstress, Chanel excelled. She had rigorous practical sewing training from her 'aunts' at the orphanage, but she also had a creative influence, from one of her actual aunts. Her father's sister, who young Gabrielle would visit each summer as a holiday from orphanage life, showed the girl how to

## THE FACTS

**Release date:** 2009  
**Director:** Anne Fontaine  
**Cast:** Audrey Tautou, Benoît Poelvoorde, Alessandro Nivola, Marie Gillain

## "A woman in love is helpless..."

MAIN: Audrey Tautou gives a wonderful performance as a headstrong and intelligent Gabrielle Chanel – later to become fashion icon, Coco  
LEFT: In 1910, when this photo was taken, Chanel opened a boutique in Paris, which is still there today  
BELOW: Chanel was at the forefront of high-class fashion for six decades

be creative with a needle and thread, adapting hats to suit her own style – a skill that would become the cornerstone of all her future success.

## LOVE AND PARIS

Frustrated with life as a seamstress, Chanel set her sights on a new challenge. After several failed solo vaudeville auditions in the nearby city of Vichy, which she probably saw as a stepping stone to Paris, Chanel was set to become a *gommeuse* – a dancer who wore a

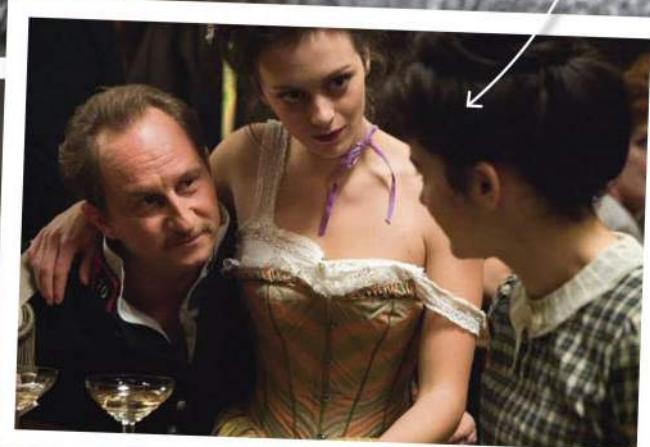
**“Too many feathers. Too much make-up. Too much everything.”**

**OUT OF ORDER**

In the film, Chanel meets Balsan after one of her shows at the cafe, when actually she may not have even started **singing in public** until after she had met him.

**CHARACTER BLEND**

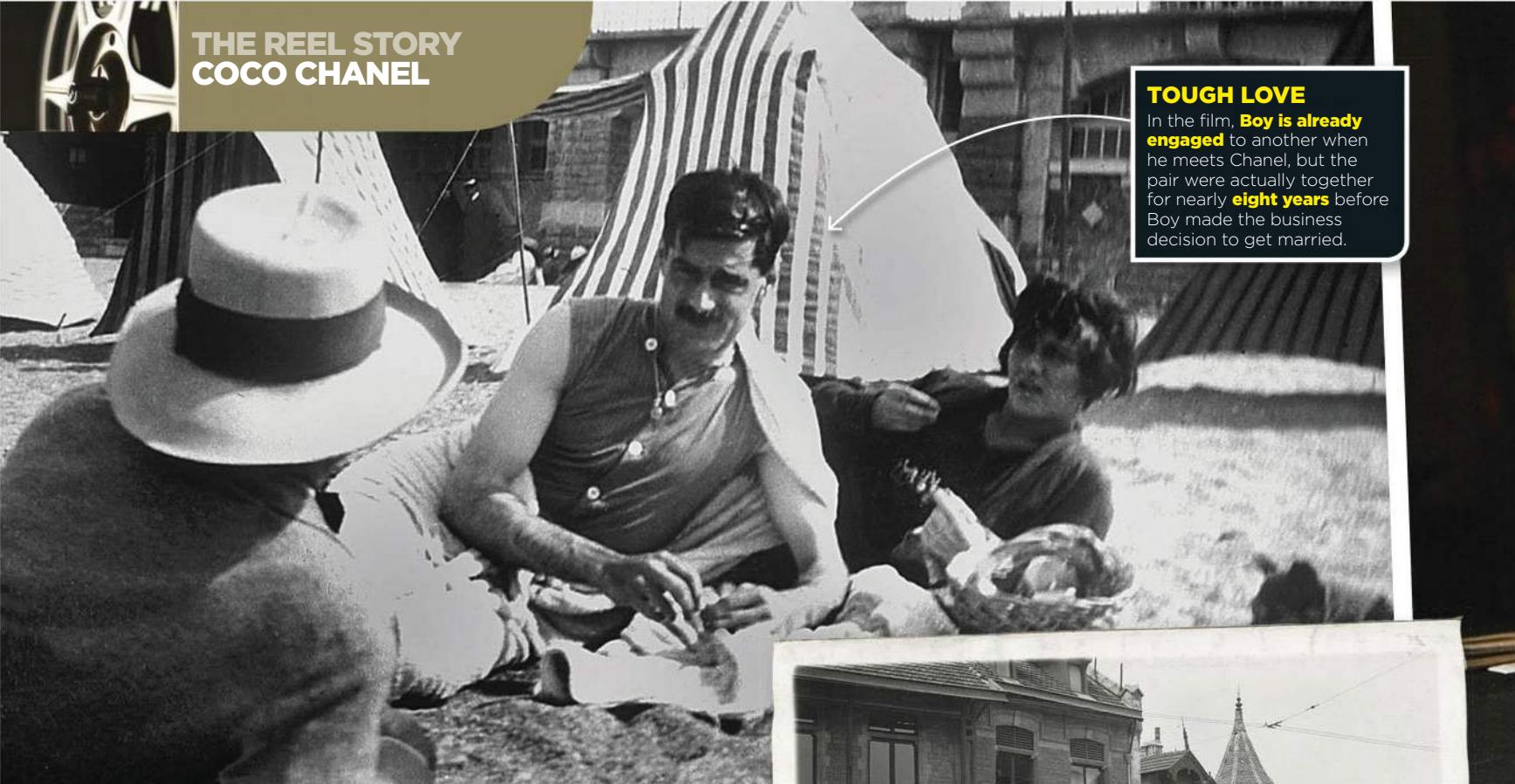
Adrienne, presented in the movie as Chanel's sister, was in reality **Chanel's young aunt**, and not the girl she entered the orphanage with.



**“Who has seen Coco? Oh Coco! Oh Coco!”**

LEFT: Gabrielle Chanel (Audrey Tautou, left) was taught the first skills of her craft at an orphanage, alongside her sister Adrienne (played by Marie Gillain)

ABOVE: Benoît Poelvoorde's Etienne Balsan is intrigued when he first lays his eyes on Chanel in a cafe



TOUGH LOVE

In the film, *Boy* is already engaged to another when he meets Chanel, but the pair were actually together for nearly **eight years** before Boy made the business decision to get married.

**“Oh mon cheri, successful women do not fall in love” – Coco Chanel**

ABOVE: Chanel is photographed with her mastachioed English lover, Arthur Capel – known as ‘Boy’ – while on holiday on the beaches of Saint-Jean-de Luz, southern France, in 1917

RIGHT: In 1915, Chanel opened her third boutique in Biarritz, which thrived even during World War I. It is here that she supposedly comes up with her first fashion collection



Coco Chanel championed minimalist fashion styles

heavily embellished and highly revealing costume. Before she got very far with this, however, a convention-defying plutocrat with a passion for race horses, named Étienne Balsan, invited her to become his mistress. At the age of 23, Chanel moved in with this Champagne-swilling libertine at his Compiègne home, ‘Royallieu’.

Here, Chanel entered the life of live-in mistress. She was his second such – he already had one *croquesse de diamante*, or ‘diamond scruncher’. Chanel struggled in this world. She began to loath people who did not work, and often let others dominate conversation. She did, however, learn to indulge in lazy mornings – often reading in her pyjamas until noon – and, either at Balsan’s request or shrewdly sensing that it was the way to make herself alluring to him, to love and understand horses.

With little else to do, she also began to develop her sense of style, and to step outside of the fashion norm. At the time, the *à la mode* look for women included a corset for a tiny waist, a

bustle for an enhanced rear, as well as ostentatious accessories. In time, Chanel would do her best to bring to an end to such abundant styles. She hated corsets, saw too much embellishment as garish, and the enormous hats of the day as distracting. For her, simplistic was more beautiful, and concealing the silhouette was even more alluring than revealing it. These are now fundamental laws of fashion but, at the time, they were revolutionary.

At Royallieu, Chanel donned jodphurs for horse riding while going sans-corset most of the time, and her daring taste soon piqued the interest of Balsan’s female friends. One such character was Emilienne d’Alençon, Balsan’s other live-in lover. She was among the first to be taken with Chanel’s modest straw boater hats, and word soon spread among the fashionable gossips of the *haut monde* of Balsan’s talented ‘little friend’.

As hints of possible success arose, so Chanel’s desire to work grew. In 1908, at the age of 25, she broached with Balsan

the idea of opening a hat shop. After being initially reluctant, he relented, and offered her his Parisian bachelor pad to work from. But before she could begin, another great passion developed.



**HE’S JUST A BOY**

In 1909, Balsan whisked Chanel away for a trip to the Pyrenees, where she met a self-made English businessman named Arthur ‘Boy’ Capel. He was making a fortune in coal, was a famed polo player and quite the charmer. He was also the love of Chanel’s life. Their initial affair was intense and, when the holiday was over, Chanel decided to leave Balsan and go home with Boy. She wrote a note for Balsan and left him, waiting for Boy at the train station. She was uninvited but, it seems, very welcome.

Their romance continued to grow, as did Chanel’s business. Living in Paris with Boy, and with both financial and business assistance from her lover, Chanel opened a millinery boutique on Rue Cambon in Paris in 1910, where the



#### HIDDEN DESIGNER

Chanel did indeed watch her collection launches from these mirrored stairs. Perching **on the fifth step**, she could see her models and the audience, but **she was hidden from view**.

between her three locations, she was selling sportswear, blazers, dresses, accessories and, of course, her hats.

In the final moments of the movie, Chanel sits on the stairs in her Parisian boutique during a collection launch. Models surround her, as the sound of applause fills the room. She is the picture of elegance: Coco has become Chanel. It appears to be shortly after Boy's death, as though her grief catapulted her into a frenzy of her best work. But, in reality, she did not suddenly become an icon and release an occasion-wear collection overnight. As with many elements of her rise, Chanel's success developed gradually, and more slowly, certainly, than the film reflects. While significant liberties are taken with the chronology of events, *Coco Before Chanel* is distilled with the truths of the heroine's character. Tautou brings Coco's bravery, bluffs and charm to the fore. And it is not only Tautou's portrayal that fits, but the film's cinematographic style echoes the Chanel look: it is clean, elegant and beautifully made. ☺

Even through World War I, her fashion enterprise flourished. Chanel opened a couture house in Biarritz, employing some 60 women, where she embraced the austere fashions that wartime encouraged. Rather than expensive textiles, she favoured simple jersey – it was a cheap and efficient material, and she knew how to make spectacular garments out of it. Despite the time of conflict, this fledgling fashion house was selling dresses with 7,000-franc price tags, about £1,500 today.

#### THE END OF THE AFFAIR

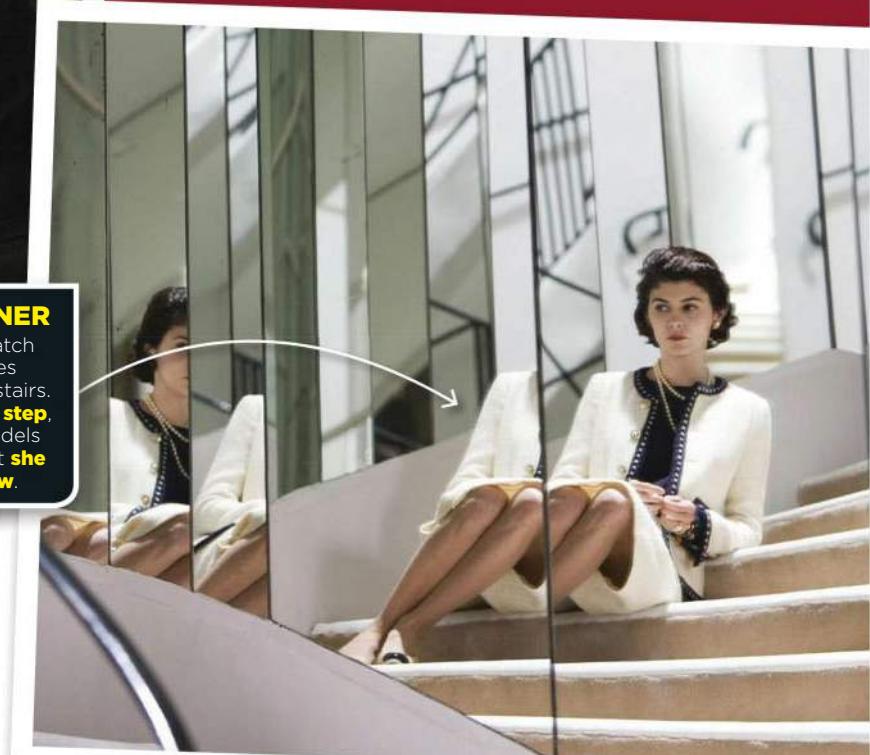
Though Boy gave Chanel some of the happiest years of her life, theirs was far from an idyllic relationship. Boy had a wandering eye and, most heartbreakingly of all for Chanel, he married another not for love, but as a business decision. Despite such setbacks, their passion continued. It was a tragedy that truly ended the love affair: he was killed in a car accident in 1919. Chanel couldn't attend the funeral because she was the mistress, but she did visit the site of the crash, where she broke down in tears on the road.

By the time Boy passed away, Chanel was set. She had already paid back much of the investment he had put up and,

**"I always knew I'd be no one's wife. Not even yours (Boy). It's just that sometimes, I forget"**

LEFT: Chanel was responsible for a number of innovative fashion trends in the early 20th century, including the 'little black dress', which was designed in the 1920s

BELOW: At the denouement of *Coco Before Chanel*, the now-successful Chanel watches the launch of a collection from the steps of her boutique



## Ones to watch: fashion icons

### **Dior and I** (2014)

This enlightening documentary offers a rare glimpse inside the world of Christian Dior, and considers the history of the fashion house as a new creative designer takes the reins.



Christian Dior's creative designer, Raf Simons

### **Diana Vreeland: The Eye Has to Travel** (2011)

Another documentary, this time on the life of fashion journalist, Diana Vreeland, who worked for 26 years at *Harpers Bazaar*, and as *Vogue's* Editor-in-Chief for eight.

**McQueen and I** (2011)

A profile of designer Alexander McQueen, who rose from humble origins to fashion super-stardom through the 1990s.



**WHAT DO YOU THINK?**  
What film based on true historical events should be the next 'Reel Story'?  
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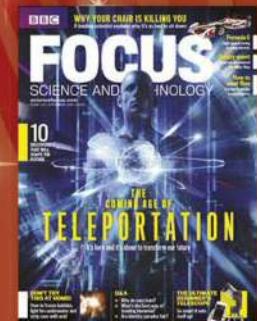
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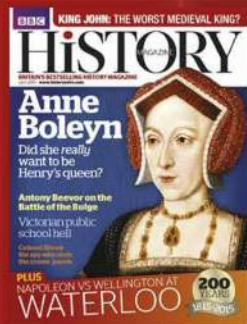
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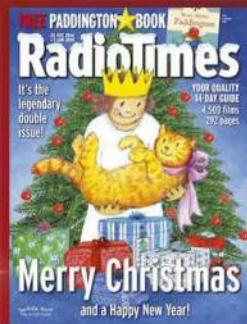
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# Q&A

## YOU ASK, WE ANSWER

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Social historian, genealogist and author of *Mr Darcy's Guide to Courtship* (2013)



#### GREG JENNER

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#### GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

The legend of Saint George's slaying of the dragon was brought to England by the Crusaders

### DID YOU KNOW?

#### TOMBS IN BLOOM

Thomas Hardy, before he was a writer, was an architect's apprentice. He was once tasked with exhaling the bodies in Old St Pancras Graveyard to make way for the new train station, but, after the work was done, Hardy was stuck with the headstones. So he arranged them around a young ash tree - and they're still there.

## WHO WAS ST GEORGE?

 George, or Georgios in his correct (Greek) form, was a Syrian or Palestinian officer in the Roman army. During the persecutions of the Christian faith by Emperor Diocletian in AD 303, he was tortured and executed for his religious beliefs.

Revered as a martyr (and later a saint) by the church, icons of George usually show him in full military

attire, with spear, helmet and shield emblazoned with a red cross, and many depict him fighting a demon or dragon - thought to represent his ultimate battle against the powers of Satan. The widespread veneration of George in Western Europe followed in the wake of the First Crusade, as many of those returning from the Holy Land were keen to associate themselves with the strong and

virtuous soldier, going so far as using his cross as their insignia.

In 1348, Edward III of England adopted St George as spiritual patron for his chivalric 'Order of the Garter'. By the mid-15th century, the muscular George had replaced the earlier Saxon Kings Edward 'the Confessor' (died 1066) and Edmund 'the Martyr' (died 869) as Patron Saint of England. MR

GETTY



# WHEN DID WE START USING PINK FOR BABY GIRLS AND BLUE FOR BOYS?

Historically, it was girls who were often dressed in blue, as it was thought to be a calm, dainty colour. Pink, on the other hand, represented the hot, impulsive nature of boys. This colour scheme persisted until the end of the 19th century – but was still being discussed as late as 1927 in a *Time* magazine article. Before pre-natal testing, bootie-knitting grannies-to-be often chose white, the colour of innocence, or yellow as 'neutral' shades to hedge their bets. In truth, we don't know the reasons for the about-face sometime in the 1940s, but by the 1960s 'pink for girls' was so ingrained it became a cause-celebre for the feminist movement. **SL**



**TRUE COLOURS**  
Pink used to be for boys, and blue for girls

**“WHEN THE RICH THINK ABOUT THE POOR, THEY HAVE POOR IDEAS”**

EVA PERÓN (1919-52)

Having grown up in poverty, Eva Perón was determined to do more for the working classes on becoming First Lady of Argentina in 1946. The existing system for social welfare was woefully deficient so she replaced it with her own. Within two years, the Eva Perón Foundation had employed thousands of workers, provided household goods and built homes, hospitals, schools and orphanages.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**MICE TO SEE YOU**  
In 1519, the citizens of Stelvio, Italy, prosecuted field-mice for the wanton and malicious damage of crops. Found guilty, the mice were sentenced to perpetual banishment.



Find out more about John Malcolm's tarring and feathering on page 22

## Was tarring and feathering fatal?

Today, tarring and feathering could kill but historically, the tar used for the humiliating 'punishment' – favoured by mobs in revolutionary America – was not the asphalt tar used on our roads, but a pine resin, which melted at a much lower temperature.

It was still an awful ordeal, which burned and scorched the skin, and the feathers would also choke the victim.

And getting it off afterwards must have

been excruciating as it meant scraping off the tar from already blistered skin.

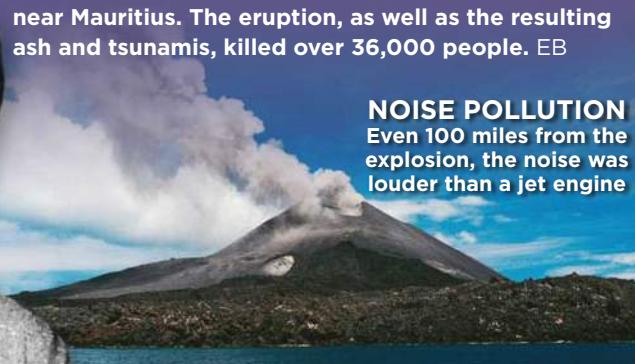
British Customs Official John Malcolm was tarred and feathered twice. The first time was mild – as he was tarred over his clothes – but on the second occasion in 1774, he was stripped naked, tarred and feathered, flogged and forced to drink tea until he vomited. He was then paraded around Boston, getting frostbitten as well as scalded. He complained to the British Government, enclosing bits of his skin as proof of his suffering. **SL**

**42**

Napoleon's placing, out of a class of 58, when he graduated from military college in 1785.

## WHAT WAS THE LOUDEST-EVER KNOWN SOUND?

The loudest sound in historical record is thought to be the cataclysmic eruption of the Indonesian volcano Krakatoa, early on the morning of 26 August 1883. Based on the investigation of the explosion by Dutch scientist Rogier Verbeek, it has been suggested that the sound measured 180-90 decibels (permanent hearing damage can be caused at 130 decibels). The noise was reportedly heard in Australia, and even as far as 3,000 miles away on the island of Rodrigues, near Mauritius. The eruption, as well as the resulting ash and tsunamis, killed over 36,000 people. **EB**



**NOISE POLLUTION**  
Even 100 miles from the explosion, the noise was louder than a jet engine

## IN A NUTSHELL

# THE COLD WAR

In the wake of World War II, tensions between two superpowers brought the globe to the brink of nuclear disaster



### Why did the Cold War begin?

Despite being allies in World War II, fighting together against the Axis powers, great tension and resentment existed between the USSR and the United States. When the war ended in 1945, these diplomatic strains between the two great superpowers of the day erupted into outright mutual distrust and enmity, with the Western powers fearing the rise of Communist governments in Eastern Europe. Both sides began vying for international dominance and as the nuclear age had dawned, they built, tested and stockpiled immensely powerful weapons that could destroy the world.

This conflict without all-out military action became known as the Cold War, a term possibly coined in a 1945 article by author George Orwell to describe an ideological confrontation between the two powers.

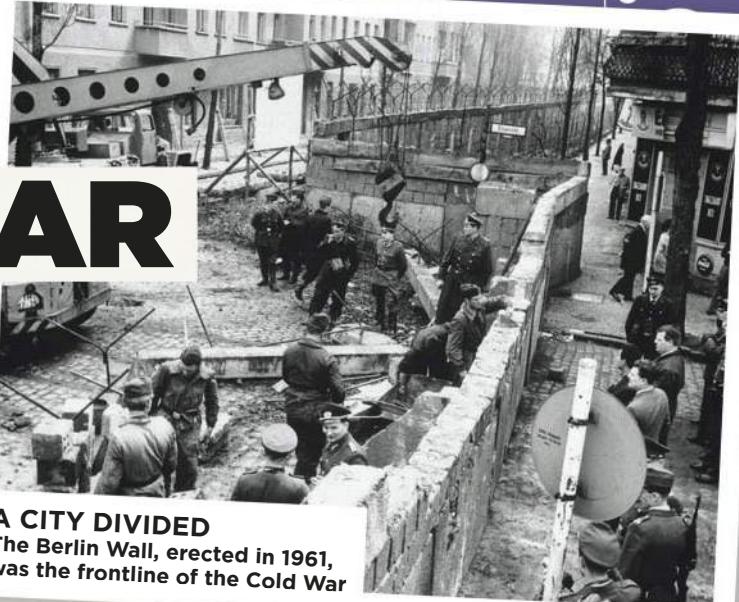
Then in 1961, East Germany's Communist government, which was part of the Soviet occupation zone, built an enduring symbol of the Cold War: the Berlin Wall. Built to prevent defections from

East to West, the wall also kept people from West Germany from entering and undermining the Socialist state. Until 1989, families and friends were divided.

### What were the areas of rivalry between the superpowers?

The war was ultimately a clash of civilisations: American Capitalism versus Soviet Communism. To prove the superiority of their own ideology – as well as technology, firepower and political-economic strength – the United States and USSR embarked on the nuclear arms race. In 1952, the Americans exploded the H-bomb, a weapon 2,500 times more powerful than the atomic bomb detonated over Hiroshima, but not to be outdone, the Soviets built their own in 1953. The rivalry almost spilled into nuclear war with the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962, when the Soviets installed missiles on Cuba, just 90 miles from Florida. Disaster was eventually averted after Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev and US President John Kennedy came to an agreement.

Space provided another arena for the conflict as both sides



### A CITY DIVIDED

The Berlin Wall, erected in 1961, was the frontline of the Cold War

competed to get there. In 1957, Sputnik became the world's first artificial satellite and first man-made object to be placed into the Earth's orbit – a win for the Soviets. But in 1969, US astronaut Neil Armstrong became the first person to walk on the Moon.

### Was any blood shed during the conflict?

Although neither side ever fought the other, the war was fought by proxy states that fought for the beliefs of both superpowers. The Vietnam War of 1954–75 was a prime example, with anti-Communist South Vietnam, supported by the Americans, pitted against Communist North Vietnam, which received military assistance from the Soviets and Communist China. The North wished to unite Vietnam under a single Communist regime, while the south was fighting for

a country more closely aligned to Western values. The war was bloody and long, resulting in as many as 2 million civilian deaths on both sides as well as the deaths of some 1.1 million North Vietnamese and Viet Cong fighters.

Other battle zones were Afghanistan (from 1979–89), which saw the Soviet army and allied Afghan forces fight US-supported insurgent groups. Elsewhere, the Korean War (1950–53) saw Russian-backed North Korea fighting the American-backed South. Between 1 and 2 million civilians were killed.

### Who won the Cold War and how did it end?

In 1969, Richard Nixon became US President and encouraged the use of diplomacy over military action. A policy of 'détente' (relaxation) was adopted towards the Soviets and, in 1972, the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty was signed, prohibiting the manufacture of nuclear missiles.

Tensions rose under Ronald Reagan's presidency, as he sought to rid the world of Communism, but the new Soviet Premier, Mikhail Gorbachev, was a much more willing diplomatic partner. In 1989, the Berlin Wall was finally ripped down after nearly three decades, and Gorbachev's domestic policies of *glasnost* ('openness') and *perestroika* ('restructuring') helped make the country more democratic – leading to the dismantling of the Soviet Union in 1991.



### SUPERPOWERS RACE

President John F Kennedy meets Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev; the 1957 launch of Sputnik gives the Soviets the first win in the Space Race





# HOW DID THEY DO THAT? THE MAYFLOWER

The ship that carried the Pilgrims to the New World



On 16 September 1620, a merchant ship, the *Mayflower*, sailed from England, bound for the New World. On board were 102 men, women and children, half of whom (the 'Saints', or 'Pilgrims' as they are known today) were escaping religious

persecution, while the other half (the 'Strangers') were seeking adventure and a new life across the Atlantic.

The mission to create a settlement in the Virginia territory, however, was almost a disaster. A second ship, the *Speedwell*, was meant to join the voyage, but it was unseaworthy so

the passengers were crammed into the *Mayflower*. Then, terrible storms and high waves made the crossing miserable. The *Mayflower* finally limped into view of the New World after 66 days. The Pilgrims had made it, but – as they quickly found out – their troubles were only beginning.



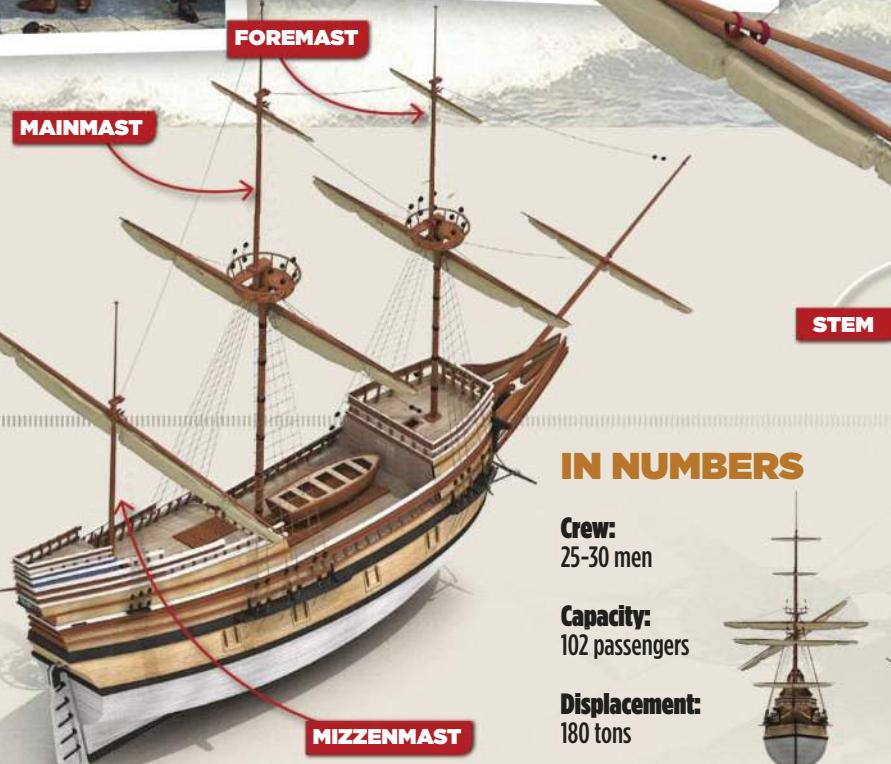
**16 SEPTEMBER 1620**  
The *Mayflower* sailed from Plymouth, England



**21 NOVEMBER 1620**  
After 66 days, the Pilgrims landed at what is now Plymouth, Massachusetts

## WINTER IS COMING

If the crossing was bad, that was nothing compared to the first winter spent on the *Mayflower*. Due to food shortages and outbreaks of disease, only half aboard survived to see spring and the creation of their New World settlement, Plymouth.



## LAND HO!

The rough crossing meant the *Mayflower* didn't land at its intended destination in the Virginia territory, but at Cape Cod, which was too far north.

## MAYFLOWER COMPACT

While anchored at Cape Cod (modern-day Massachusetts), 41 Pilgrims – worried that law and order would break down once ashore – signed an agreement, the 'Mayflower Compact' on 11 November, creating a "civil body politic". It was the United States' first governing document.

## IN NUMBERS

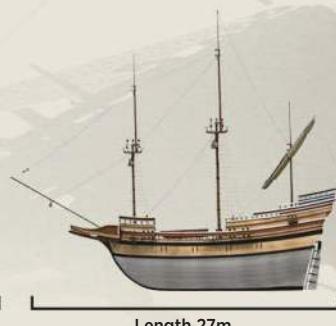
**Crew:**  
25-30 men

**Capacity:**  
102 passengers

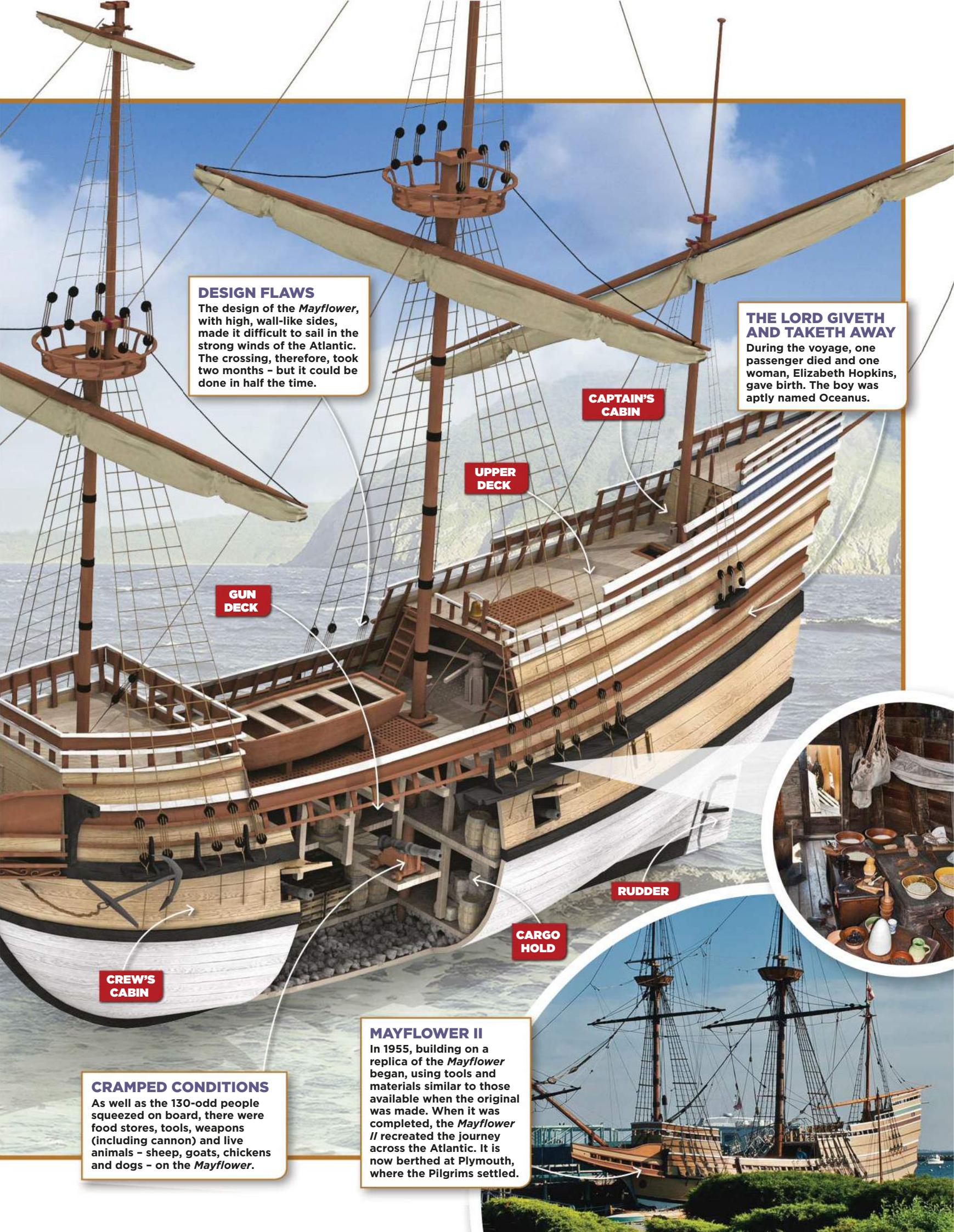
**Displacement:**  
180 tons



Beam 7.6m



Length 27m





## “WHY DO WE SAY...”

**GONE FOR A BURTON**

Meaning lost or no longer useful, the RAF popularised the phrase in World War II. It was either adopted from a beer ad (where a person would disappear as they had gone for a pint of Burton ale) or from Montague Burton tailors, who specialised in suits for demobbed pilots. So it could be a morbid reference to a fellow flyer lost 'in the drink' or to them being fitted for a wooden overcoat, or coffin.

**WHEN DID THE BRITISH DEVELOP THEIR 'STIFF UPPER LIP'?**

Although the British are now known for their emotional restraint, the nation's history shows a rather contrary tendency. Many visitors to England in the 16th century were struck by how tactile and demonstrative the people were, with one commenting, "Wherever you move, there is nothing but kisses". Until the 18th century, it was encouraged to express passions with public weeping and fainting.

After the French Revolution, however, Britain turned from the emotional excesses and unruly behaviour of its neighbours, and towards an ideal of 'vigorous masculinity'. Instilled by the Victorians, the idea of British resilience was cemented in the 20th century, particularly during World War II when it gave purpose to those coping with personal and national tragedy. EB



**18**  
The number of minutes it took for RMS Lusitania to sink in 1915 after being struck by a German U-boat torpedo, killing 1,198 people.

# Who executed King Charles I?

No one wanted to be the man who chopped off a king's head – even London's Common Hangman, Richard Brandon, turned down the job, despite lucrative offers.

So on the fateful day, 30 January 1649, both the executioner and their assistant were heavily disguised with false hair and beards. At the traditional moment when the head of the deceased is held up, accompanied by the cry of "Behold the head of a traitor!", Charles I's head was brandished in silence so the assistant's voice couldn't be recognised.

That didn't stop rumours, including, somewhat ludicrously, that it had been Oliver Cromwell himself. A popular theory held the man was French – they were renowned as the best head-removers in Europe – but, to this day, we can't be sure who did



**ENIGMA OF THE EXECUTIONER**  
We may never know the identity of the man who chopped off Charles I's head

it. A 'confession' after Brandon's death 'admitted' it had been him, after being paid £30, but this was likely a forgery. Whoever did the deed was certainly a professional. When Charles's body was exhumed in 1813, the head was found to have been severed in a single blow. SL

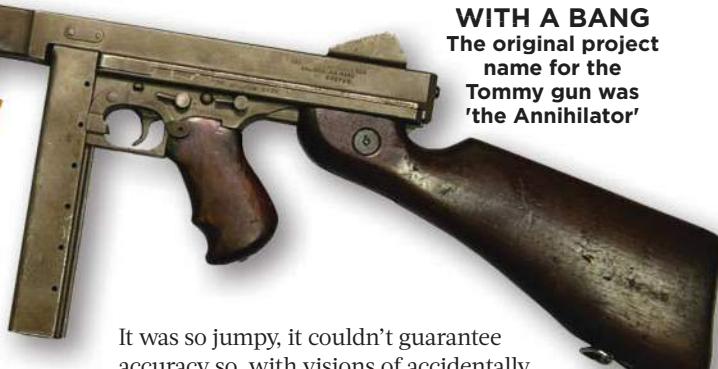
## HOW OLD IS VEGETARIANISM?

In times of food shortage, many of our ancestors were forced into vegetarianism, but there is evidence of people choosing to abstain from meat. In Ancient Greece, thinkers like the famed mathematician Pythagoras debated whether animals had souls and whether a vegetarian diet was actually healthier. The fact that animals have been regarded as sacred to many civilisations has also stopped them being eaten. Some ancient cults would sacrifice animals and inhale the roasting aromas but refuse to dine on the meat, while a recent scientific analysis of 45 Ancient Egyptian mummies showed that many of them steadily ate meat-free diets. GJ

## Is the **Tommy** gun named after anyone?

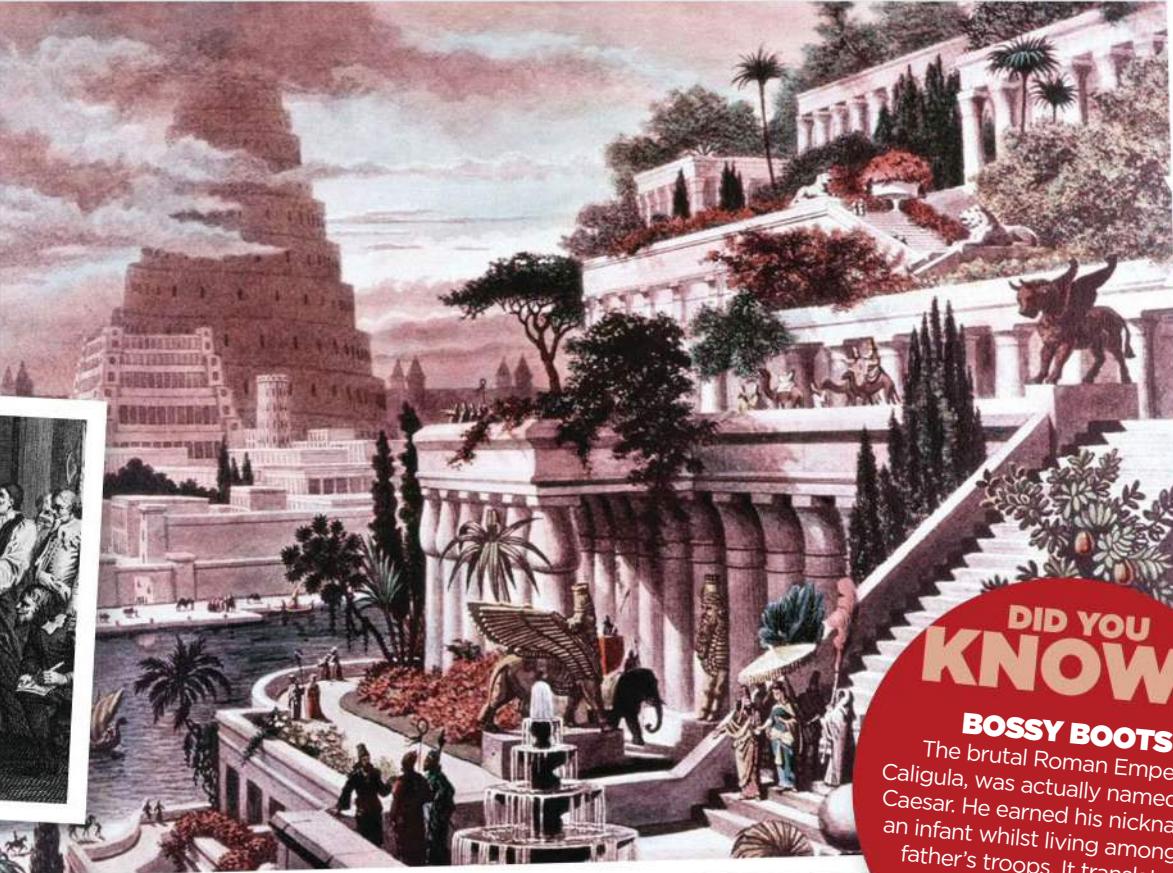
During World War I, General John T Thompson spent so long developing a hand-held submachine gun – a steel-plate-piercing weapon technically capable of firing 800 rounds a minute – that, by the time he was ready to launch his invention, it wasn't needed.

Thompson, therefore, approached the American police, but the gun wasn't intended for civilian use.



It was so jumpy, it couldn't guarantee accuracy so, with visions of accidentally hitting bystanders, the police passed.

In an extraordinary move, the 'Thompson Anti Bandit Gun' instead went on general sale at gun suppliers as well as hardware and even drug stores, making the 'Chicago Typewriter', as it was nicknamed, available to every bandit in town. SL

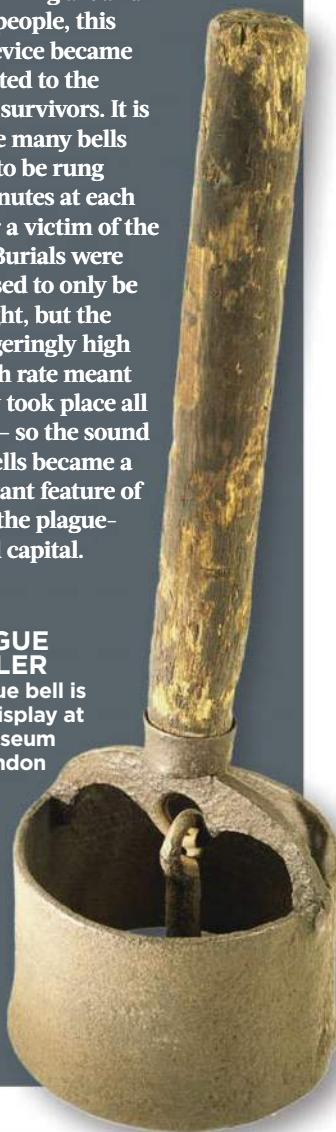


## WHAT IS IT?

As the Great Plague swept through London in 1665, killing around 100,000 people, this simple device became much-hated to the suffering survivors. It is one of the many bells that had to be rung for 45 minutes at each burial for a victim of the plague. Burials were supposed to only be at night, but the staggeringly high death rate meant they took place all day – so the sound of bells became a constant feature of life in the plague-blighted capital.

### PLAQUE PEALER

This plague bell is now on display at the Museum of London



# WERE THE HANGING GARDENS OF BABYLON REAL?

King Nebuchadnezzar II, it is said, created the legendary Hanging Gardens of Babylon for his Iranian-born Queen, Amytis, in the early sixth century BC. Yet no certain evidence of any gardens, hanging or otherwise, have been recovered from the Ancient Mesopotamian city of Babylon. It is possible that

the story conflated tales of earlier gardens, such as those of the seventh-century BC palace of Nineveh, on the banks of the Euphrates, although this hasn't been confirmed. To date, the Hanging Gardens remain the only one of the original seven wonders of the Ancient World whose location and very existence remain unknown. MR

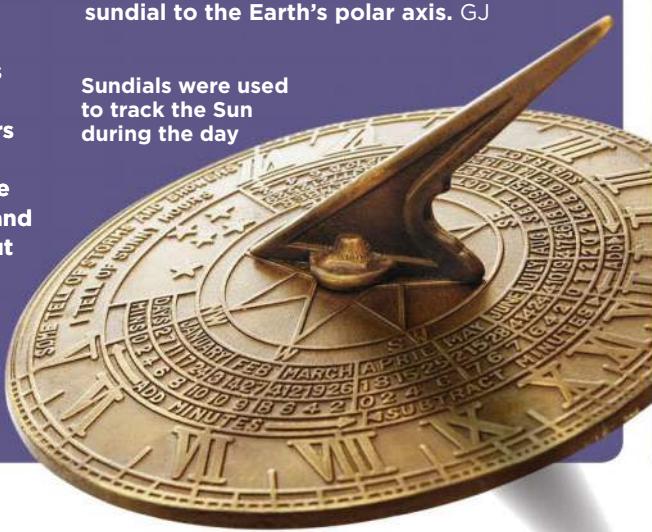
## HOW DID PEOPLE TELL TIME BEFORE CLOCKS?

Since prehistoric days, humans have measured time by watching the Sun's arc across the horizon.

Ancient Egyptians used shadowclocks to show the Sun's movement during the day, while at night, they tracked the stars using sophisticated charts such as the Ramesside Star Clock. By the time of the Ancient Greeks, sundials, water-clocks and sand-timers provided more accuracy. But – perhaps strangely to us – timekeeping still mirrored the changeable seasons, so, during the Roman Empire, an hour was longer (about 75 minutes) in the summer than in the winter (45 minutes) because there was more

daylight in June than December (and even then, these figures weren't set in stone). The standardised 60-minute hour only arrived in the 14th century, possibly thanks to Arab scientist Ibn Al-Shatir, who calibrated his sundial to the Earth's polar axis. GJ

Sundials were used to track the Sun during the day



### NOW SEND US YOUR QUESTIONS

Wondering about a particular historical happening? Get in touch – our expert panel has the answer!

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Want to enjoy more history? Our monthly guide to activities and resources is a great place to start

# HERE & NOW

BRITAIN'S TREASURES p90 • PAST LIVES p92 • BOOKS p94

## ON OUR RADAR

What's caught our attention this month...

### EXHIBITION

## Plague, Fire and Revolution

At the National Maritime Museum, London, until 28 March 2016, [www.rmg.co.uk](http://www.rmg.co.uk)

In the second half of the 17th century, the **famed diarist, gossip and socialite Samuel Pepys** lived through a King's execution, the death and re-birth of the monarchy, a plague, the Great Fire and the Glorious Revolution – and, luckily for us, he wrote it all down. With the **candid and irreverent words** of Pepys as a guide – as well as 200 paintings and artefacts – a major exhibition at the National Maritime Museum invites you to step back into this dramatic period of British history, and **uncovers the colourful life of the diarist himself**.



Samuel Pepys (far right) was witness to King Charles II's restoration (right) and London's plague outbreak (above)



### EVENT

## Neolithic craft and textiles

6 December, starting at 10am; find out more at [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

Make the most out of a winter trip to Stonehenge by heading to the **impressive new visitor centre** for a demonstration of prehistoric crafts and textiles. Learn the kind of **cord-making, twining, weaving and leatherwork** used in the Neolithic.

Get down to the bare bones of how animal skeletons and antlers were used in crafts



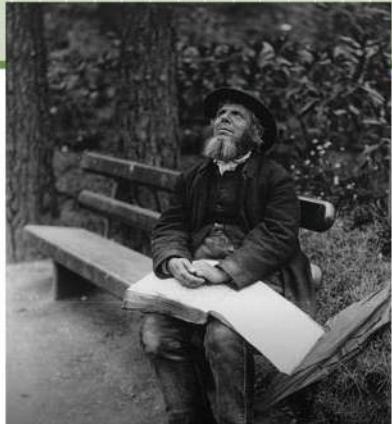
While there, visit the enlightening Broken Lives exhibition

### EVENT

## Human Rights Day

10 December, 1pm, at the International Slavery Museum, Liverpool

There are talks and performances in the apt backdrop of **Liverpool's powerful Slavery Museum** to mark the annual Human Rights Day.



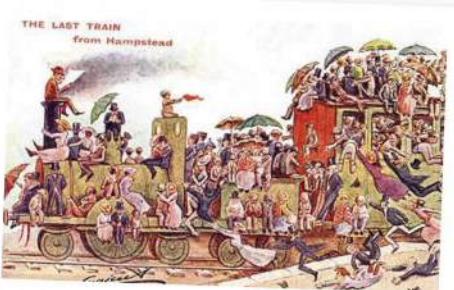
Braille – so the blind could read and write – was invented in 1824

## TALK

### Blindness in Victorian Britain

3 December, National Archives. Free entry, find out more at [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)

The Victorian era is not usually associated with progressive thinking towards the physically disabled but, by tracing the history of 'finger reading' in a free talk, Heather Tilley, British Academy postdoctoral fellow, offers a compelling argument that it was **a time when ardent blind campaigners** fought for their rights.



A plethora of postcards provide snapshots of Hampstead's history

## EXHIBITION

### Hello from Hampstead!

Ends 13 December at Burgh House, London, [www.burghhouse.org.uk](http://www.burghhouse.org.uk)

This nostalgia-fuelled colourful collection reveals **the history of postcards in Britain**. This is your last chance to make the post!



Chris Hemsworth's Owen Chase is out for revenge in this over-whale-ming tale

## FILM

### In the Heart of the Sea

In cinemas 26 December

What begins as a routine voyage for the crew of the whaling ship *Essex* is transformed in an instant into a **harrowing, seemingly hopeless quest for survival** in this historical drama.

When the *Essex* is rammed, in 1820, by a colossal and vengeful whale, first officer Owen Chase (Chris Hemsworth of *Thor* fame) and his shipmates are left adrift, thousands

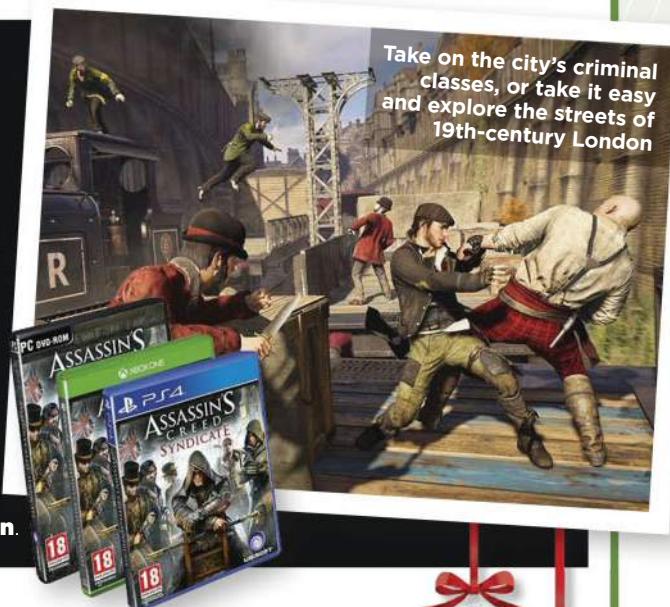
of miles from home. They are forced beyond their limits as they face starvation, storms and each other. It is the staggering true story that **inspired Herman Melville's *Moby Dick***, brought to the silver screen by Oscar-winning director Ron Howard. Delays mean we've been waiting a long time for his adventure, but it's finally time to cry, "Thar she blows!"

## GAME

### Assassin's Creed: Syndicate

Now available on PC, PS4 and Xbox One, £40, more at [assassinscreed.ubi.com](http://assassinscreed.ubi.com)

The Industrial Revolution is changing the world with new inventions and technologies, but along with the advances comes **oppression, corruption and murder**. It's the ideal setting for the latest in the popular *Assassin's Creed* series as assassins Jacob and Evie Frye take on the grubby **underworld of Victorian London**.



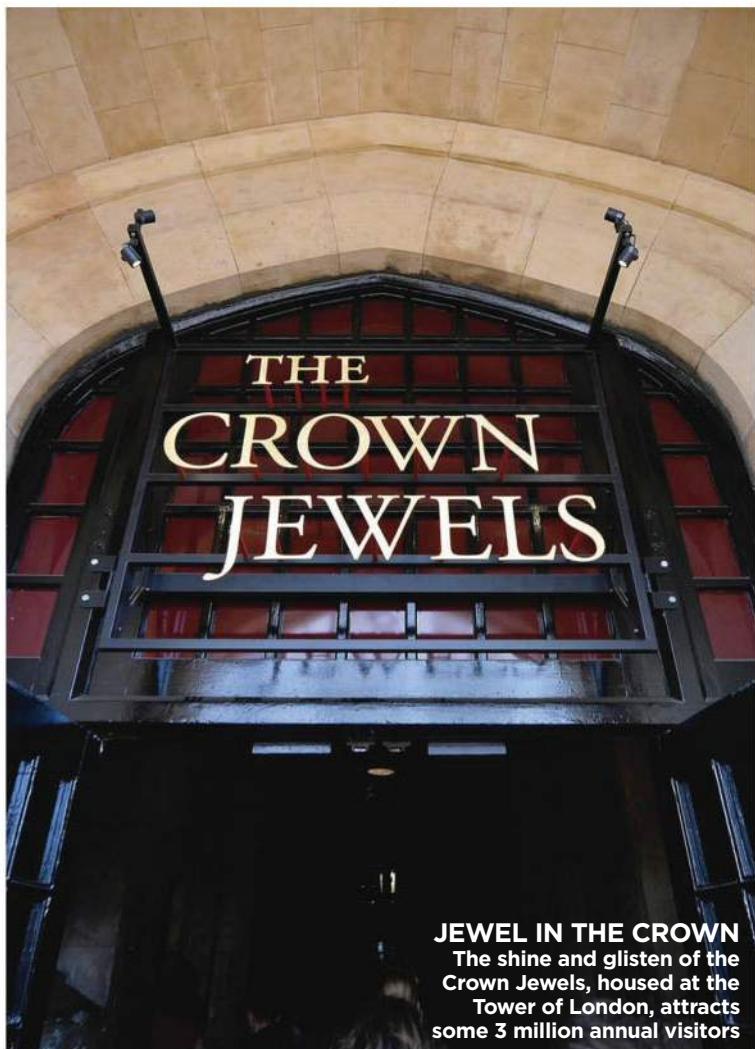
Take on the city's criminal classes, or take it easy and explore the streets of 19th-century London

## ► CHRISTMAS CRACKERS

► The Romans take over the streets of Chester for their Saturnalia parade, 17 October, 7pm. Search at [www.visitchester.com](http://www.visitchester.com)

► On 6 December, 12pm, join Queen Mary of Guise with her festive Renaissance celebrations at Stirling Castle. [www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk](http://www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk)





## BRITAIN'S TREASURES...

# THE CROWN JEWELS London

Under the ever-watchful guard of the Tower of London's Beefeaters are the precious royal treasures, which, despite civil war and theft, continue to sparkle

#### THE FACTS

##### GETTING THERE:

Tower Hill tube station is a five-minute walk from the Tower of London. There are also various bus services – check the website.



##### TIMES AND PRICES:

Summer 9.00am-5.30pm, winter 10am-4.30pm. Adult tickets to the Tower cost £24.50, concessions and online discounts apply.

##### FIND OUT MORE:

Call 0844 482 7777 or visit [www.hrp.org.uk/TowerOfLondon](http://www.hrp.org.uk/TowerOfLondon)

Often said to be priceless, the Crown Jewels are, at best estimate, probably worth over £20 billion. With such a hefty value, and the opportunity to see such rare gems, it's a small wonder that nearly 3 million people flock to the Tower of London every year. But visitors aren't drawn just by the allure of seeing the royal treasure, rather by the centuries of British history the jewels represent.

Though most English monarchs had built their own collection

of jewels, it was the Tudors who developed it into one of immense value. Indeed, the jewels soon became so precious that they were locked away behind barred windows and in iron chests, kept inside a specially built super-secure structure at the Tower.

At the end of Elizabeth I's reign, the collection included 15 diamond-studded gold collars, precious-gem-encrusted coronets and circlets, and even a piece of a 'unicorn horn'. But, thanks to a particularly turbulent episode in

British history, today's visitors will not see these fantastical items...

#### MELTING POT

In 1649, after seven years of civil war, Charles I was executed. The new head of the realm, Oliver Cromwell, enforced his Puritan ideals on the country so that along with Christmas and theatre, the jewels had to go. The crowns and other metallic pieces were melted down to make money, while the gems were sold. A handful of items survived, such as ceremonial

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR...



### IMPERIAL STATE CROWN

Worn at each State Opening of Parliament. It bears a total of 2,868 diamonds, 269 pearls, 17 sapphires and 11 emeralds.



### SOVEREIGN'S SCEPTRE

Containing the biggest colourless cut diamond in the world – the 530.2 carat Cullinan – which sits in the top of this sceptre.



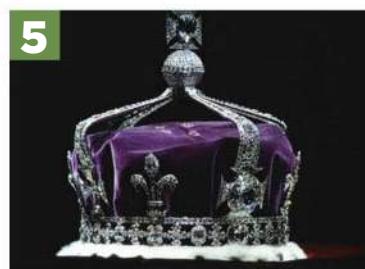
### ST EDWARD'S CROWN

This solid-gold crown, created in 1661, is the one a monarch is actually crowned with. It is named after Edward the Confessor.



### CORONATION SPOON

This 800-year-old spoon is used to anoint the new monarch with holy oil during coronations, the most sacred element of the service. It is the oldest piece in the collection.



### QUEEN MOTHER'S CROWN

The famous Koh-i-Nor diamond, found in India, sits in this crown, with 2,799 other diamonds. Formerly, the diamond sat in two other queen consorts' crowns.



### SOVEREIGN'S ORB

Made for King Charles II in 1661, at a cost of £1,150 (about £150,000 today), this orb is placed in the new monarch's right hand during his or her coronation.

## “They are worth over £20 billion”

swords, a silver-gilt, jewel-encrusted salt holder – the only item in its original state that can still be seen by visitors today – and a coronation anointing spoon. A ruby was also saved, which was set into a new crown for Charles II upon the Restoration in 1660.

The merry monarch that he was, Charles spent £13,000 (around £1.7 million in today's money) rebuilding the precious collection. Unlike his ancestors, however, he made sure the family jewels were put on public display this time. The attraction proved instantly popular, and it was no one-hit wonder. Some 350 years on, the jewels remain the most visited exhibit at the Tower of London.

The most curious episode in the history of the Crown Jewels occurred in 1671, when a veteran of the Civil Wars, 'Colonel' Thomas

Blood, and some accomplices, sought to steal them. They overpowered the keeper and 'hid' the state crown, plus some other star items, down their breeches, and tried to sneak them out. Blood even took a mallet to the crown so it would fit under his cloak.

They were caught before reaching the gate and hauled before Charles II. However, rather than coming down on Blood with the full force of the law, the King pardoned the would-be thief, granted him lands in Ireland and a generous pension. Had Blood been a secret agent to the King all along? Perhaps. Or perhaps he was just a charmer.

### YOUR VISIT

Safely locked away under armed guard at the Tower of London,

there's little chance of anyone repeating Blood's audacious nabbing of the jewels today. When visiting, make the Jewel House your first stop, and go as early as possible as the queue can be time-consuming. Stepping inside the Jewel House (and passing through vault doors that, it's said, can withstand a nuclear explosion), the hundreds of pieces that make up the collection rest on French velvet, in cases made of 5cm-thick shatterproof glass.

The exhibition itself will take around 20 minutes. Don't forget that the Crown Jewels are working regalia, and are regularly used by the royals for national ceremonies. Keep your eyes peeled for an 'in use' sign in place of one or some of the items – it's a rarely seen but strangely pleasing sight. ☺

### WHY NOT VISIT...

Make more of your trip with a visit to one of these nearby attractions

#### TOWER BRIDGE

At one of the world's most famous bridges, you can enjoy spectacular views of London, and explore the extraordinary Victorian Engine Rooms.

[www.towerbridge.org.uk](http://www.towerbridge.org.uk)

#### HMS BELFAST

Step aboard the World War II warship, the HMS Belfast, and discover more about what life was like at war and at sea.

[www.iwm.org.uk/visits/hms-belfast](http://www.iwm.org.uk/visits/hms-belfast)

#### THE LONDON DUNGEON

Witness the gorier side of the capital's history, as a mixture of live actors, special effects and exciting rides bring a touch of gallows humour to our past.

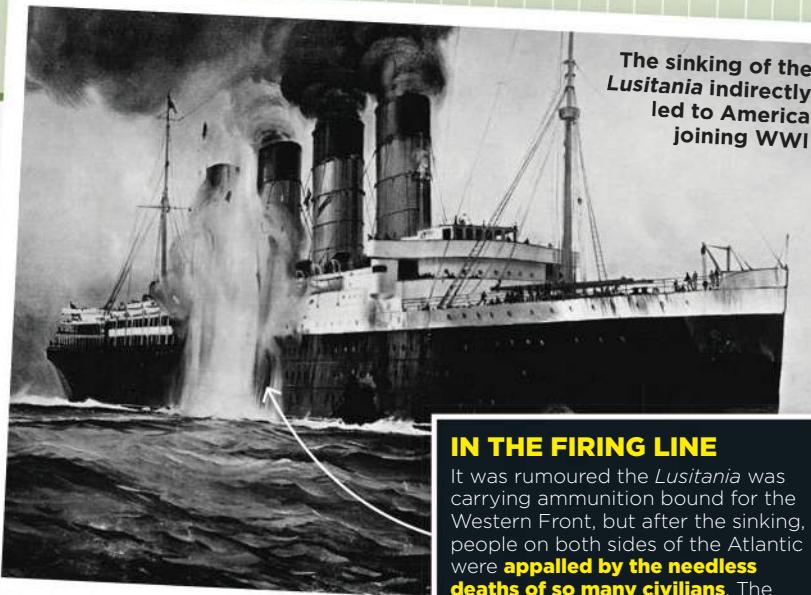
[www.thedungeons.com/london](http://www.thedungeons.com/london)

## PAST LIVES

HISTORY THROUGH THE EYES OF OUR ANCESTORS

# THE TERRIBLE COST OF WWI'S INFAMOUS CIVILIAN ATTACK

**Jon Bauckham** recounts the final crossing of RMS *Lusitania* – sunk with nearly 2,000 people on board...



The sinking of the *Lusitania* indirectly led to America joining WWI

### READER'S STORY



**Martin Parr,**  
Oxfordshire

Following the major earthquake in 1906, my great-grand uncle, William Leyland, emigrated from St Helens to San Francisco to work as a carpenter and rebuild the city.

In 1915, however, William bought a third-class ticket for the *Lusitania* with the intention of travelling back to England. I'll never know whether he planned to come home permanently as, unfortunately, he was killed when the ship went down.

Although William's body was never recovered, I first became aware of him as a teenager when I spotted his name on a cemetery marker. My father told me we were related so I did some basic research, but it wasn't until a couple of years ago that I was able to learn more about William's life online.

As a result, I have since identified photographs in a family album as being ones that William sent home from America. Although their significance has been lost over time, it's clear they had been saved by my great-grandmother as a memento of her lost brother.

It's the sort of thing that reminds you that these were real people with real lives.

Before boarding *Lusitania*, William had made a life for himself in America



**O**n 1 May 1915, Reverend Herbert Gwyer and his new wife, Margaret, boarded the RMS *Lusitania* in New York and set sail for Liverpool. After serving as a missionary in Canada for three years, Herbert was due to begin a new post back home in England, where he also hoped to introduce the young bride to his parents.

Although war was raging across Europe, it should have been a safe crossing for the newlyweds. Not only was the United States a neutral nation, but the luxurious *Lusitania* was capable of an average speed of 25 knots per hour – more than enough to escape any skirmish. Not that anyone thought it would come to that. As fellow passenger Parry Jones would later recall, there was a feeling among the travellers that "no nation would dare" to sink a vessel packed with civilians.

Such optimism was to prove fatal. As the ship navigated the southern coast of Ireland on 7 May, it was spotted by Walter Schwieger, the captain of a nearby German U-boat. After following the *Lusitania* for 50 minutes, he ordered his crew to fire a single torpedo: a direct hit. This triggered a massive explosion within the hull, causing the liner to tilt sideways and sink rapidly.

Due to the angle of ship, many of the lifeboats had become impossible to reach. Even for Schwieger, the chaos was difficult to



Some of the bodies pulled from the water were laid to rest in southern Ireland, near the site of the attack

watch. Writing in his logbook, he admitted he would not have been able to launch a second torpedo into a group of people "struggling to save their lives".

The Gwyers, who were dining with friends at the time of impact, were lucky enough to scramble onto one of the few remaining lifeboats. But Margaret – believing she would be crushed by one of the ship's huge funnels – jumped back on board the stricken vessel, leaving Herbert powerless to do anything but row to safety. Miraculously, Margaret was sucked into the funnel and spat back out to the surface by an explosion, before being pulled from the sea and reunited with her spouse on a rescue boat.

"At least we lost those awful wedding presents," she later remarked.

Yet other passengers were not so fortunate. Of the 1,962 men, women and children on board, 1,198 perished in the atrocity, sparking widespread revulsion and anti-German sentiment. With the United States now left questioning its neutrality, pressure was building towards the first true World War. ◎

### GET HOOKED

Herbert and Margaret Gwyer's story can be found along with other survivors' accounts at [www.rmslusitania.info](http://www.rmslusitania.info). To mark the centenary of the sinking, a free exhibition, *Lusitania: Life, Loss, Legacy*, is on display at the Merseyside Maritime Museum. Visit [www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk) for more.

### DO YOU HAVE AN ANCESTOR WITH A STORY TO TELL? GET IN TOUCH...

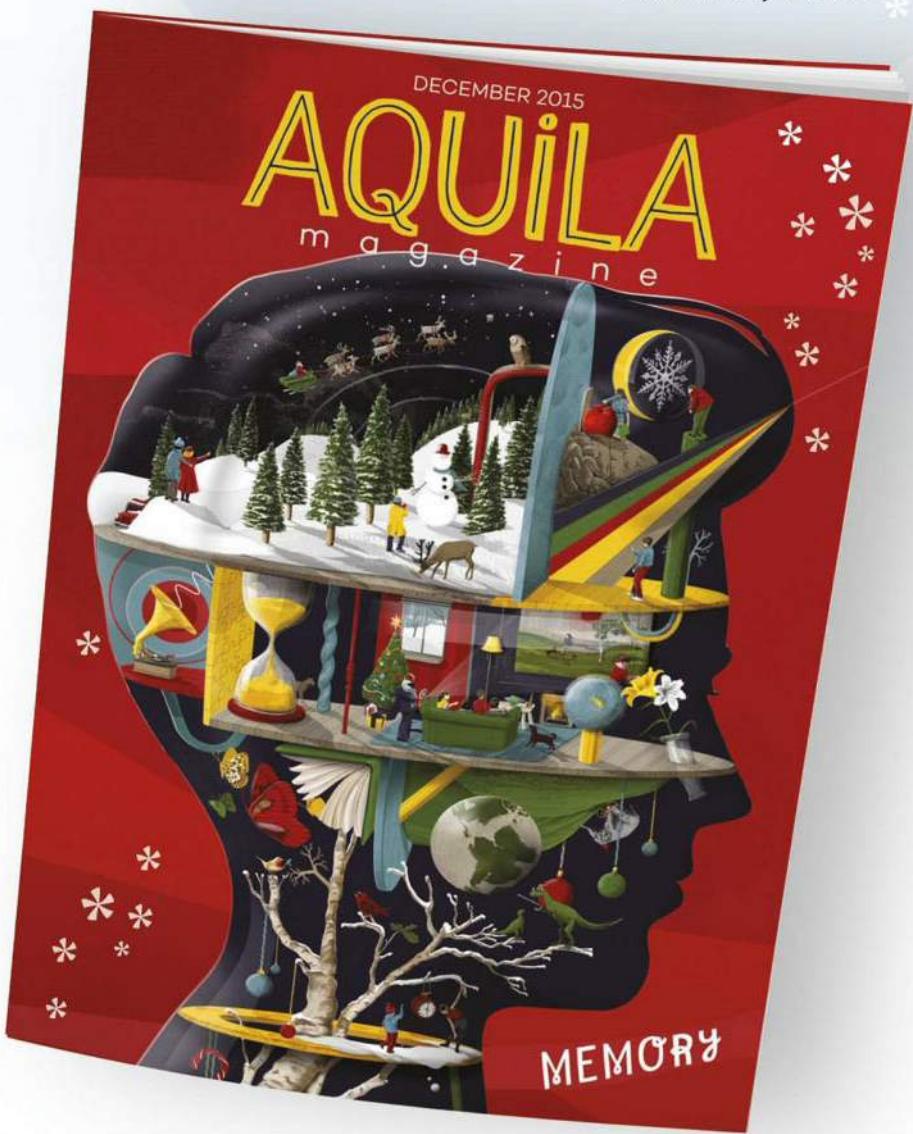
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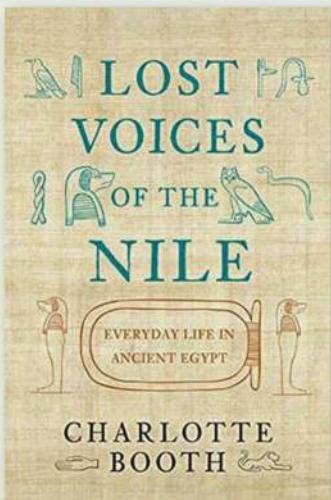


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# BOOKS

## BOOK OF THE MONTH

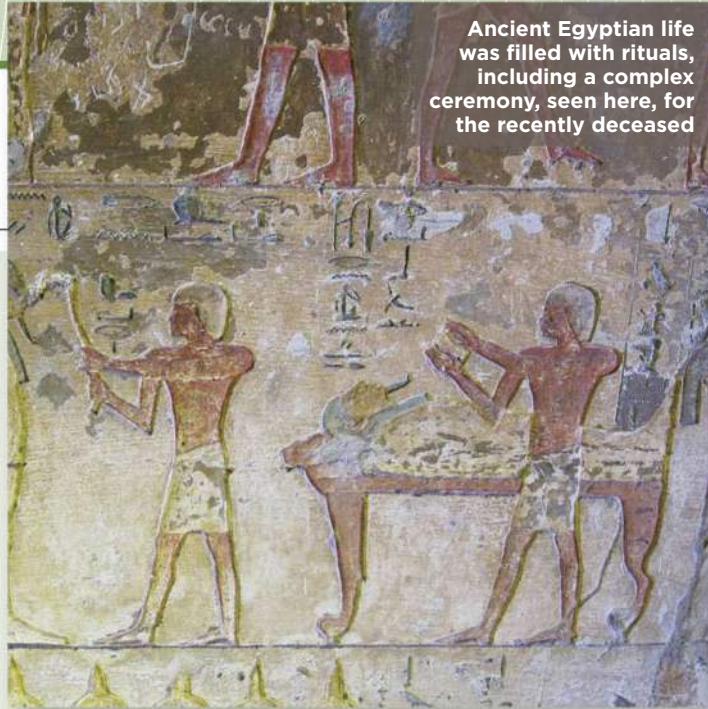


### Lost Voices of the Nile: Everyday Life in Ancient Egypt

By Charlotte Booth

Amberley Publishing, £20,  
304 pages, hardback

Ancient Egypt is best-known as a land of god-like pharaohs and spectacular pyramids, but what was life like for the 'ordinary' people? This lively account – drawing on receipts, legal documents, even laundry lists – introduces some of the previously unknown men and women from the period and paints a compelling picture of life in the desert thousands of years ago. And



Ancient Egyptian life was filled with rituals, including a complex ceremony, seen here, for the recently deceased

through exploring the lives of characters such as Taimhotep, who asked the revered priest Imhotep to help his wife conceive a son, and the man obsessed with making lists, Kenhirkhopshef, Booth concludes that everyday life for an Ancient Egyptian was not that different from ours today.

## MEET THE AUTHOR

**Charlotte Booth** compares everyday life in Ancient Egypt to modern western society, and finds that they aren't that dissimilar...

### How can we learn about the lives of ordinary people in Ancient Egypt?

We are extremely lucky that the archaeological evidence can tell us a great deal. Not only do we have the mummies of the people themselves and the objects buried with them, but we also have their villages and homes. For information about New Kingdom everyday life, Deir el Medina on the west bank at Luxor is the most prolific. This village has provided tens of thousands of ostraca (shards of limestone used as notepaper).

### How much would we recognise of our own lives in this period?

I hope readers will learn that, although the Ancient Egyptians lived thousands of years ago in a different climate and

worshipped different gods, they were not that different from us.

People are always led by the same emotions (love, desire, jealousy and bitterness) and the same instinctual motivations (to provide for one's family, to be successful and to lead a peaceful and happy life). These can all be glimpsed in the ancient texts.

### To what extent was Ancient Egyptian society unequal?

From these texts, we know that men and women held equal status in society: both could instigate divorce, own and

distribute property, and bring court cases against each other. Certain restrictions, however, made women slightly less equal when it came to work restrictions and percentages of possessions they could inherit or maintain following a divorce, although there were means to work around such restrictions.

### Do any characters stand out as particular favourites?

Two characters stand out: Paneb and Naunakhte. Paneb has a reputation as a rogue, drunk, rapist and murderer. Yet the only evidence for such a reputation is a single papyrus in which he is accused of all these things by his embittered adopted uncle, who contested Paneb's inheritance from his brother. I am not sure such a

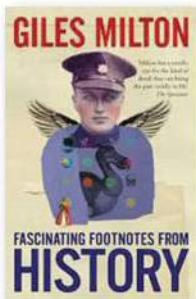
document should be considered as a reliable source!

Naunakhte, on the other hand, I admire purely for being a grumpy old lady who disinherited her children for neglect while feeling the need to list all the items they would not inherit. Both characters provide a wonderful insight into the reality of the people living in Ancient Egypt – as well as telling us that humanity has not changed in 4,000 years.

**"People are always led by the same emotions and instinctual motivations"**



## THE BEST OF THE REST

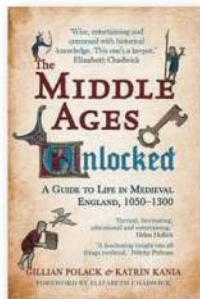


### Fascinating Footnotes from History

By Giles Milton

John Murray, £14.99, 400 pages, hardback

Collected from shorter e-books published over the past five years, this compendium of the unlikely and the unusual – from Hitler's addiction to cocaine to the theft of Charlie Chaplin's body and the resulting ransom – retains a pleasingly humanistic focus throughout. One note of caution: you may be surprised at how tragic some of the stories are.

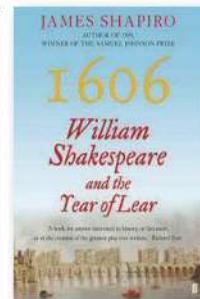


### The Middle Ages Unlocked: a Guide to Life in Medieval England, 1050-1300

By Gillian Polack and Katrin Kania

Amberley, £20, 400 pages, hardback

Skilfully negotiating the complex medieval landscape of feudal politics, warring barons and struggling peasants, this wide-ranging overview combines history and archaeology to offer a great place to start if you're eager to learn more about the medieval period in England.



### 1606: William Shakespeare and the Year of Lear

by James Shapiro

Faber and Faber, £20, 448 pages, hardback

How much can we learn about the famous playwright from a single year in his life? Quite a lot, it turns out. To mark 400 years since William Shakespeare's death, James Shapiro delves into a good year for the Bard – when he wrote *King Lear*, *Macbeth* and *Antony and Cleopatra* against a backdrop of plague and political intrigue.

## READ UP ON...

### THE 1960S

From musical revolution to political scandal, these books offer an overview of a decade that had a lasting effect on British culture and society...



A lasting icon of the 1960s was the fashion of Mary Quant, from her scandalous mini-skirts to hot pants



### White Heat: a History of Britain in the Swinging Sixties, 1964-1970

By Dominic Sandbrook (2006)

Dominic Sandbrook's masterful, vibrant look at the second half of the 1960s argues that the period's 'cultural revolution' may have been overstated, and that change was felt far more gradually.

### An English Affair: Sex, Class and Power in the Age of Profumo

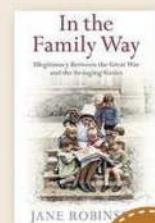
By Richard Davenport-Hines (2013)



Delving behind closed doors to uncover the decade's politics, particularly a cabinet minister's affair, this insightful book is, by turns, sympathetic and outraged. A must-read.

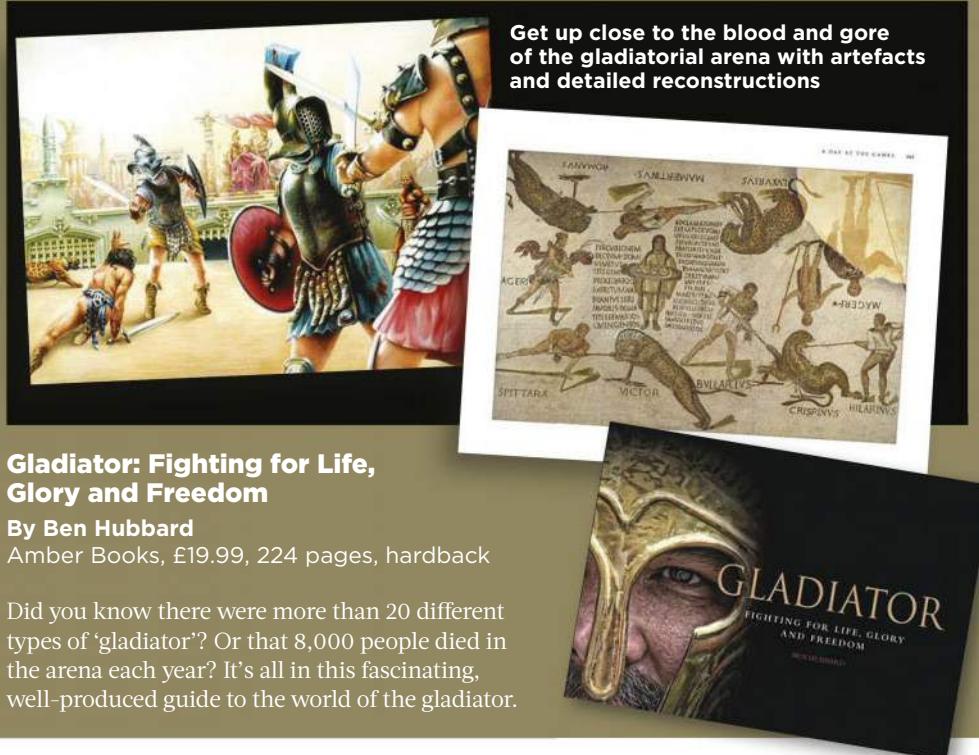
### In the Family Way: Illegitimacy Between the Great War and the Swinging Sixties

By Jane Robinson (2015)



A sobering, moving exploration of the reality of birth 'out of wedlock'. Many of the personal stories, revealing a period of slowly changing social values, will stay with you long after the final pages.

## VISUAL BOOK OF THE MONTH



### Gladiator: Fighting for Life, Glory and Freedom

By Ben Hubbard

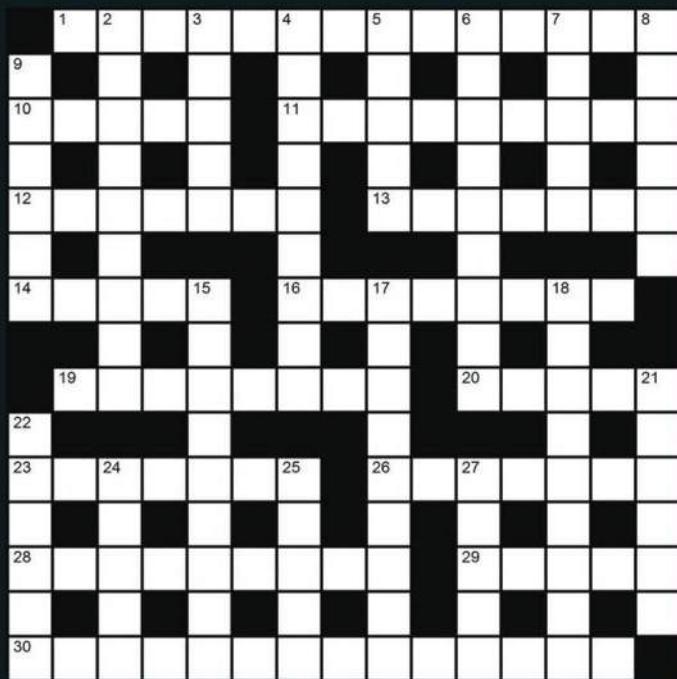
Amber Books, £19.99, 224 pages, hardback

Did you know there were more than 20 different types of 'gladiator'? Or that 8,000 people died in the arena each year? It's all in this fascinating, well-produced guide to the world of the gladiator.

# CROSSWORD N° 23

You could be one of three prize winners if you complete this month's historical crossword

Set by Richard Smyth



## ACROSS

1 Lengthy European conflict during the 17th century (6,5,3)  
 10 "The parks are the \_\_\_ of London" – William Pitt, First Earl of Chatham (5)  
 11 Fictional European country created by adventure novelist Anthony Hope (1863-1933) (9)  
 12 1922 novel by celebrated Irish writer James Joyce (7)  
 13 Parliamentary law of 1715, "for preventing tumults and riotous assemblies, and for the more speedy and effectual punishing the rioters" (4,3)  
 14 A hostile, mountain- or cave-dwelling creature, from Scandinavian folklore (5)  
 16 The name for the members of a literary group founded in

Oxford in the 1930s, including JRR Tolkien and CS Lewis (8)  
 19 Name of an ancient dynasty of north-west Ireland (8)  
 20 The largest lake in Italy, known to the Ancient Romans as Lake Benacus (5)  
 23 Code-name for the Second Quebec Conference, held during World War II (7)  
 26 John James \_\_\_ (1785-1851), American ornithologist, naturalist and painter (7)  
 28 Northumbrian village, site of a major Anglo-Scottish battle in 1388 (9)  
 29 Frankie \_\_\_ (b.1934), New Jersey-born singer, frontman of The Four Seasons (5)  
 30 Chalky plateau on which Stonehenge stands (9,5)

## CROSSWORD COMPETITION TERMS & CONDITIONS

The competition is open to all UK residents (inc. Channel Islands), aged 18 or over, except Immediate Media Co Bristol Ltd employees or contractors, and anyone connected with the competition or their direct family members. By entering, participants agree to be bound by these terms and conditions and that their name and county may be released if they win. Only one entry per person.

The closing date and time is as shown under **How to Enter**, above. Entries received after that will not be considered. Entries cannot be returned. Entrants must supply full name, address and daytime phone number. Immediate Media Company (publishers of *History Revealed*) will only ever use personal details for the purposes of administering this competition, and will not publish them or provide them to anyone without permission. Read more about the Immediate Privacy Policy at [www.immediatemedia.co.uk/privacy-policy](http://www.immediatemedia.co.uk/privacy-policy).

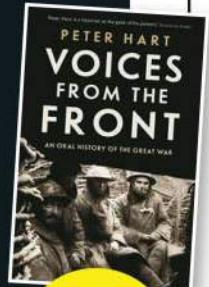
## DOWN

2 American Industrialist who famously said "History is more or less bunk" (5,4)  
 3 Wars of the \_\_\_, long-running dynastic conflict in 15th-century England (5)  
 4 \_\_\_ Dales, National Park created in 1954 (9)  
 5 "All men are liable to \_\_\_" – 1690 quote by English philosopher John Locke (5)  
 6 System of controlling the distribution of resources, implemented in Britain during and after World War II (9)  
 7 Willy \_\_\_, Roald Dahl's famed chocolatier (5)  
 8 Historic commercial district of Venice, Italy (6)  
 9 Elizabeth \_\_\_, mistress of King Henry VIII, better known as 'Bessie' (6)  
 15 *The \_\_\_*, 1998 film about the Women's Land Army (4,5)  
 17 Town in south-west Ireland, home to Ross Castle (9)  
 18 Giuseppe \_\_\_ (1807-82), Italian general who has a biscuit named after him (9)  
 21 Epic first-century BC work by Roman poet Virgil (6)  
 22 "The danger of the past was that men became slaves; the danger of the future is that men may become \_\_\_" – Erich Fromm, 1955 (6)  
 24 '\_\_\_ War', term for warfare conducted without restrictions or boundaries (5)  
 25 Pacific nation, independent since 1968, formerly known as 'The Pleasant Island' (5)  
 27 "The first Whig was the \_\_\_" – Samuel Johnson (5)

## CHANCE TO WIN...

### Voices From the Front

by Peter Hart  
 Now that every soldier who fought in World War I has passed away, there has never been a better time for Hart's thoughtfully compiled oral histories of their remarkable stories and experiences.  
 Published by Profile Books, £25.



BOOK WORTH £25 FOR THREE WINNERS!

## HOW TO ENTER

Post entries to **History Revealed, December 2015 Crossword, PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA** or email them to [december2015@historyrevealedcomps.co.uk](mailto:december2015@historyrevealedcomps.co.uk) by noon on **9 December 2015**. By entering, participants agree to be bound by the terms and conditions shown in the box below. Immediate Media Co Ltd, publishers of *History Revealed*, would love to keep you informed by post or telephone of special offers and promotions from the Immediate Media Co Group. Please write 'Do Not Contact IMC' if you prefer not to receive such information by post or phone. If you would like to receive this information by email, please write your email address on the entry. You may unsubscribe from receiving these messages at any time. For more about the Immediate Privacy Policy, see the box below.

## SOLUTION N° 21



The winning entrants will be the first correct entries drawn at random after the closing time. The prize and number of winners will be as shown on the Crossword page. There is no cash alternative and the prize will not be transferable. Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited's decision is final and no correspondence relating to the competition will be entered into. The winners will be notified by post within 28 days of the close of the competition. The name and county of residence of the winners will be published in the magazine within two months of the

closing date. If the winner is unable to be contacted within one month of the closing date, Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited reserves the right to offer the prize to a runner-up. Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited reserves the right to amend these terms and conditions or to cancel, alter or amend the promotion at any stage, if deemed necessary in its opinion, or if circumstances arise outside of its control. The promotion is subject to the laws of England. Promoter: Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited

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# **SENTENCED TO LIFE**

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# A-Z of History

You lucky lot! **Nige Tassell** lights up a loaded last page with a loot of larger-than-life legends, little-known legacies and lost lore

## DR LIVINGSTONE, I ENTOMB?

When, in what is now Zambia, the Scottish explorer David Livingstone succumbed to malaria and complications caused by dysentery in May 1873, his heart was removed and buried under a nearby mvula tree. His two companions then carried his body over 1,000 miles to the nearest coast, from where it was shipped back to Britain and interred at Westminster Abbey.

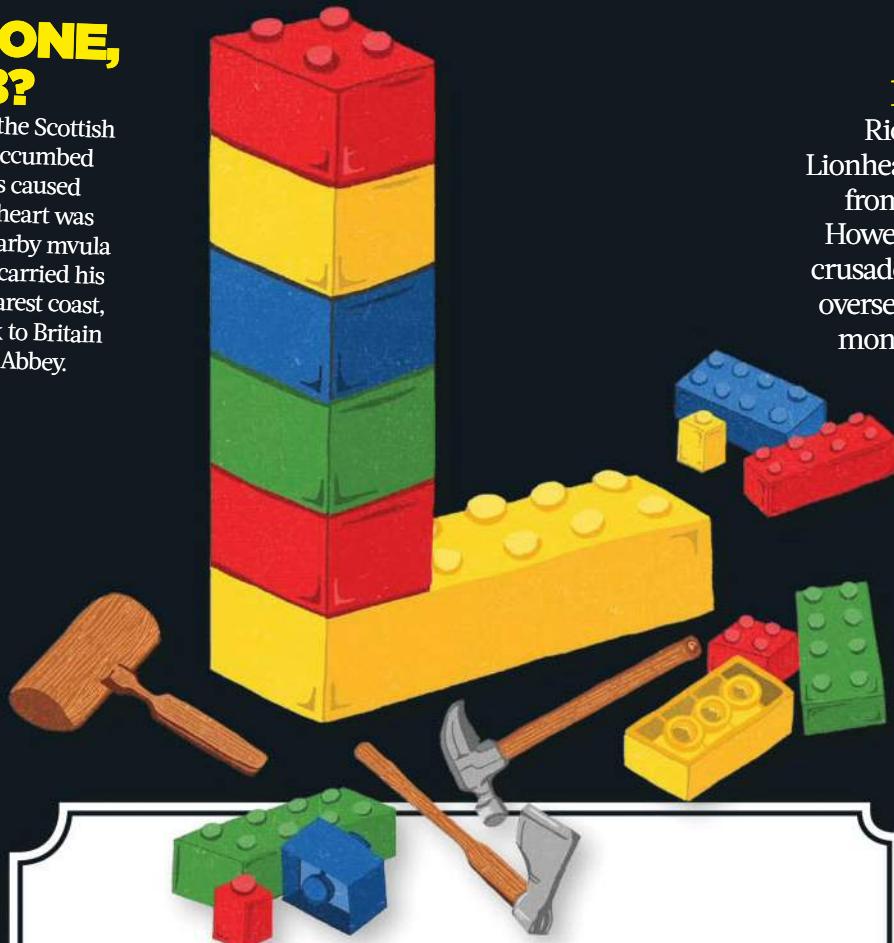
## Louis' long life

In 1715, Louis XIV's 72-year-reign as King of France ended, yet he wasn't succeeded by his son, grandson or even first-born great-grandson. He had outlived them all, so his second great-grandson inherited the throne, becoming

Louis XV at the grand-old age of five.

## LUCK OF LAOS

The landlocked nation of Laos, in south-east Asia, served as a major crucible in the Vietnam War. Between 1964 and 1973, it became the most bombed country in history – on average, it was struck by the equivalent of a B-52 bomb-load every eight minutes.



## LEGO, FROM THE LATIN...

When he started constructing wooden toys in the 1930s, Ole Kirk Christiansen, a carpenter from Denmark, named his company 'Lego', from the Danish phrase 'leg godt', meaning 'play well'. After the company introduced its now iconic plastic bricks in the late 1940s, however, the name proved particularly apt – the word 'lego' means 'I put together' in Latin.

## LIVING IN LOUISIANA

The 1860 US census recorded that 331,726 of Louisiana's residents were slaves. This was almost 47% of the state's total population of 708,002.

## No love lost for Lionheart

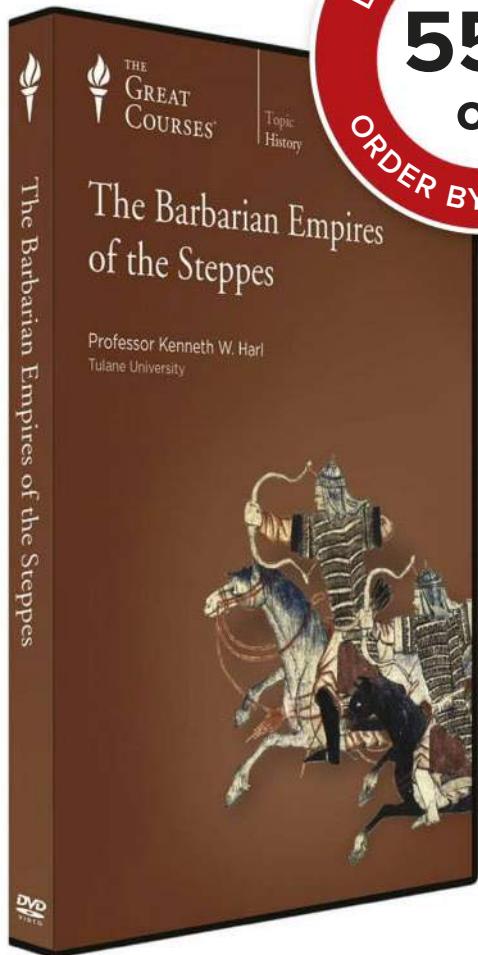
Richard I – aka Richard the Lionheart – ruled as King of England from July 1189 until April 1199. However, due to a combination of crusades and being held in captivity overseas, he actually only spent six months of his reign in England.

## LIBERAL LLOYD GEORGE

David Lloyd George is one of the most famous Liberal Prime Ministers Britain has ever produced, but his political affiliation wasn't exactly shared by his children. His son Gwilym served in a Conservative government during the 1950s as Home Secretary, while his daughter Megan went on to be elected as a Labour Party MP in 1957.

## LIGHTHOUSE CALLED LIBERTY

The world's most famous lighthouse – the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor – is arguably also the world's most useless one. When its torch was first illuminated in 1886, the beam was barely visible from Manhattan, leading one newspaper to describe it as "more like a glowworm than a beacon".



## Meet History's Most Fearsome Leaders

Attila the Hun and Genghis Khan loom large in the popular consciousness as two of history's most fearsome warrior-leaders. Yet few people are aware of their place in a succession of nomadic warriors who emerged from the Eurasian steppes to seize control of civilisations.

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9. Trade across the Tarim Basin
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12. Attila the Hun—Scourge of God
13. Sasanid Shahs and the Hephthalites
14. The Turks—Transformation of the Steppes
15. Turkmen Khagans and Tang Emperors
16. Avars, Bulgars, and Constantinople
17. Khazar Khagans
18. Pechenegs, Magyars, and Cumans
19. Islam and the Caliphate
20. The Clash between Turks and the Caliphate
21. Muslim Merchants and Mystics in Central Asia
22. The Rise of the Seljuk Turks
23. Turks in Anatolia and India
24. The Sultans of Rüm
25. The Sultans of Delhi
26. Manchurian Warlords and Song Emperors
27. The Mongols
28. Conquests of Genghis Khan
29. Western Mongol Expansion
30. Mongol Invasion of the Islamic World
31. Conquest of Song China
32. Pax Mongolica and Cultural Exchange
33. Conversion and Assimilation
34. Tamerlane, Prince of Destruction
35. Bābur and Mughal India
36. Legacy of the Steppes

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# AGINCOURT:

THE KING, THE CAMPAIGN, THE BATTLE

BY JULIET BARKER  INTRODUCED BY BERNARD CORNWELL

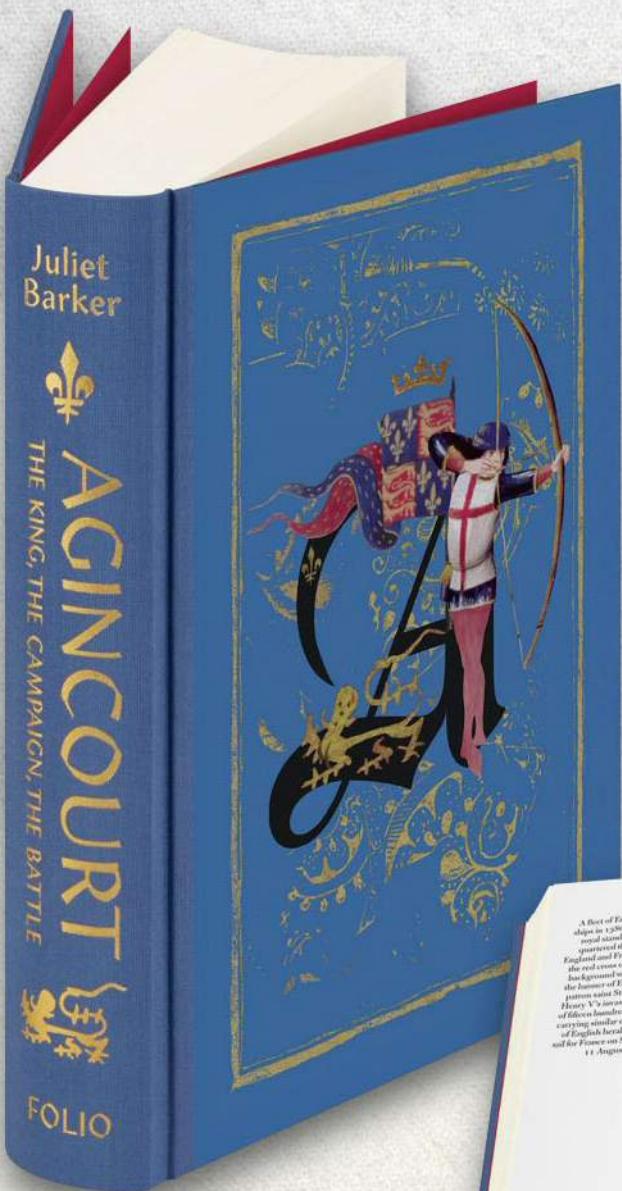
'An engrossing account, laced with unexpected and arresting images'

HELEN CASTOR, GUARDIAN



'Juliet Barker combines scrupulous scholarship with an imaginative sympathy to bring the world of Agincourt to vivid life'

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